The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

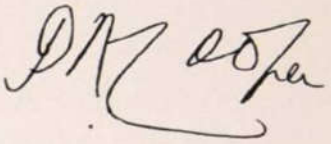
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY Hudson's Bay Company. INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670. OUTFIT 281 DEC. 1950

HEXTON MANOR,
HEXTON,
HERTFORDSHIRE.

Christmas 1950

To our readers:

I send to every one of you my warmest Greetings. May this be for you a Christmas full of gladness and good cheer, and may the New Year bring you health and happiness.



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ONE DOLLAR A YEAR

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE — Hudson's Bay Company. INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670. — WINNIPEG, CANADA

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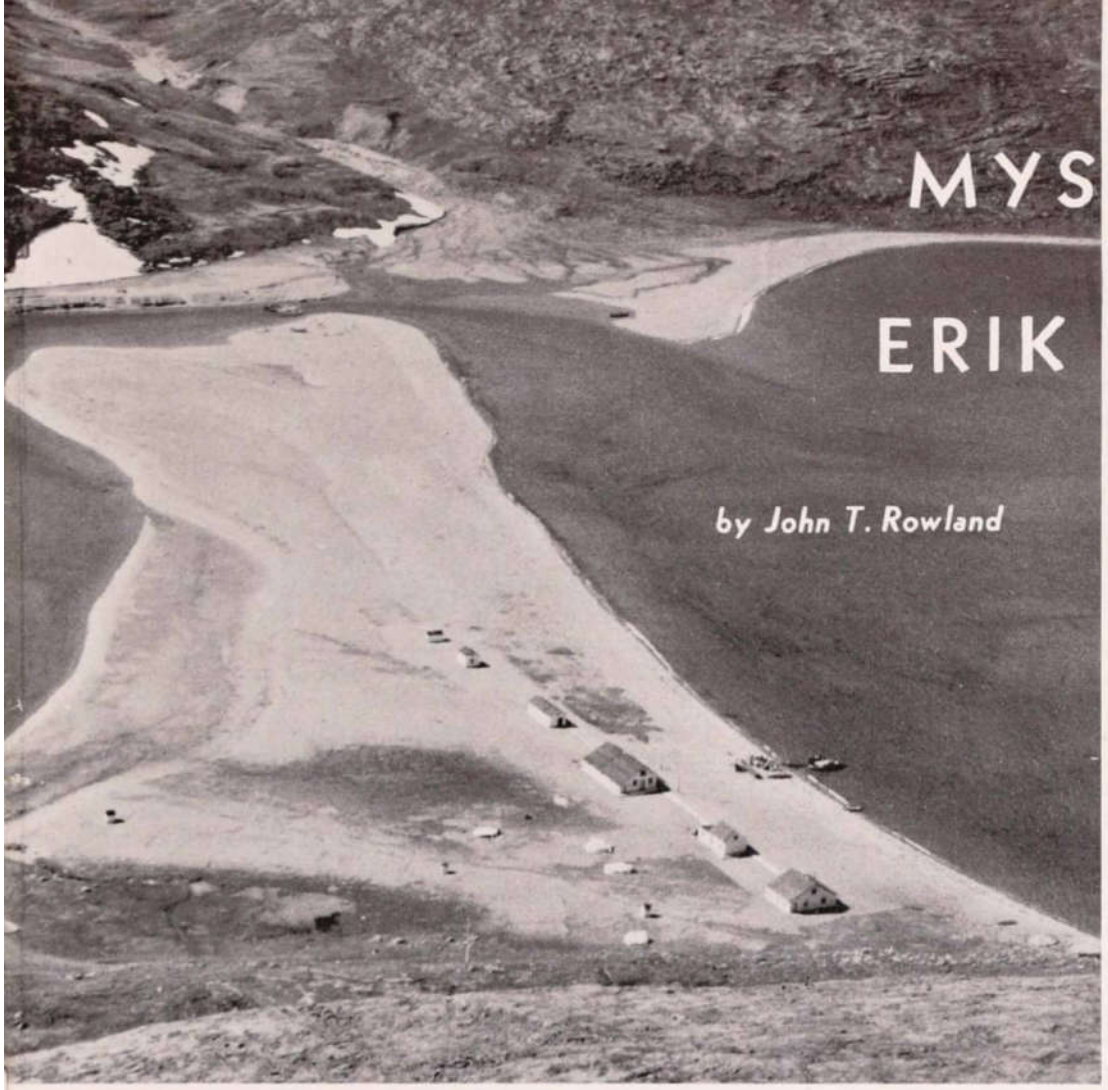


MYSTERY at ERIK COVE

by John T. Rowland

Wolstenholme Post in Erik Cove, the first H B C post in the Arctic, established by Ralph Parsons in 1909. It was from this vantage point that the Nazi submarine men looked down in the film *49th Parallel* (*The Invaders*) before they captured the post. Did the whalers of the *Seduisante* have similar designs on it?

Max Sauer

IT was late August of 1911 when the *Daryl* arrived at Erik Cove. We were greeted by the courageous young factor, Ralph Parsons, who had put that post into commission and spent two or three winters there, running a long trap line by himself before the natives started to appear. He seemed glad to see us, as it was for his use that the Company had purchased *Daryl* from the Grenfell Mission on the southern Labrador.

Erik Cove is an indentation in the high, straight shore of Ungava just east of Cape Wolstenholme. It is roughly V-shaped, a couple of miles in both dimensions and wide open to the north where it joins Hudson's Strait. It is no real harbour, yet the "strife of tide" around Cape Wolstenholme creates rips that pick up any heavy seas so that the waters of the cove are usually and most astonishingly calm. With a strong north wind one can see the seas breaking across the mouth of the cove as on a bar. At its head, on a narrow sandy beach, the two small frame buildings of the post huddled together at the foot of high hills. Bob and I thought it a desolate looking spot.

We felt we had done quite a stunt to bring this 30-foot yawl all the way from Newfoundland on her own bottom; but that exploit now appeared but a curtain raiser to what lay ahead, for Factor Parsons suggested that we kill time till the *Pelican's** arrival by an exploring cruise across the Strait to the Baffin Land shore. While we were lying in the cove, restowing supplies and getting our second wind, the strange episode that I am about to recount took place.

My shipmate, Bob, had been selected for qualities of resourcefulness and courage: a jam that would scare the average civilian blue found him merely amused. He and the factor struck up an immediate friendship. We were all three young men, Bob and I just out of college; but I had spent all my summer vacations taking boats from the States to the Grenfell Mission. That, no doubt, was why Dr. Grenfell had invited me to undertake delivery of the *Daryl* to her new home. The third member of our ship's company was old George Ford, a native of the Labrador. He was one of nature's gentlemen—kind, patient and uncomplaining—who must have found it difficult at times to take orders from a skipper of half his age.

It had not been an easy racket: I question if any boat so small had ever gone so far north under her own power. In those days there was not a lighthouse or a buoy on the

* The HBC supply ship.

whole coast and the Admiralty chart left a great deal to the imagination. We were glad for a chance to get ashore and stretch our legs. In the evening Bob and I would pay a call on the factor, and it was on one such occasion, when we were returning to the "ship" after dark, that we saw something which fetched us up with a round turn.

Anywhere else it would have been nothing to wonder at. But here, at the head of Hudson's Strait with only one ship due in a year, it was a phenomenon of interest and concern. This was a light—a small flare of light—that flashed out for a moment and then died away, out somewhere on the strait off the mouth of Erik Cove.

At first I thought my eyes were playing tricks, as when one stares too fixedly into a curtain of fog. But Bob caught the tiny flash and then old George, who had joined us on the beach, resolved our doubts. It was he, I think, who suggested the factor be informed.

Parsons appeared seriously concerned, though I did not at first gather why. To me it seemed that the light might come from a lantern in a small boat bobbing in the rips. That would account for its intermittent flashing. I pictured a native *umiak* or perhaps a lifeboat from some wrecked whaler striving to win shelter in the cove and taking this faint chance of signalling for help. Then someone—I think it was George—pointed out that the light had been moving too rapidly for such a source, and said something about burning matches over a ship's side.

Evidently that was what Parsons had in mind. In old sailing ship days it was a common method of secretly calling for help or giving warning. A man might lean over the bulwarks of a vessel and strike a match which could be seen from other ships or on shore without the people on his own vessel being the wiser.

If that was the case—and the short, relatively bright flare seemed to suggest it—the inference was obvious enough. Here stood a lonely post with a whole season's catch in its store-room. And, come to think of it, the object had been moving much too fast for an open boat. The first flare came from seaward of the eastern boundary of the cove and the last we saw, in the few minutes that elapsed till Parsons joined us, was close to its western shore. A gusty wind blew down through the funnel of the cove at our backs, sufficient to drive a sailing vessel at good speed.

This changed the picture. My first thought had been to take *Daryl* on an errand of mercy, but that seemed a false tactic as things looked now. There was a native encampment near the post, though none of them, as I recall, in the Company employ. Whether any of the hunters could have been relied upon n a fight I do not know. At any rate, our own mission seemed obvious enough: to reconnoitre. I told the factor I would run down and have a look-see.

Parsons stayed at the post, while Bob, George and I got in our dory and rowed off. On the way to the *Daryl* I made a rough estimate of the situation and hit upon this plan: Bob and George would take the dory and row down close along the west shore of the cove, while I got *Daryl* under weigh. Their small boat could easily escape detection, and after observing what the strange vessel might be they would pull out into the middle of the cove, where I would pick them up. The gusts were so fierce by now that I doubted if they could make it back under oars. They took their rifles and a screened light. As they shoved off, I told Bob to fire a shot into the air if he needed immediate help, and I would run for the flash.

Although yawl rigged, *Daryl* depended chiefly upon her motor for propulsion. This was a heavy-duty kerosene engine of the hot bulb variety, which had to be warmed up before it would run. This operation usually took from five to ten minutes. I got the torches going on the cylinder-heads, put on an extra sweater and oilskins, and went forward on deck to buoy the mooring cable before letting it slip. This was rather tricky, as we were fast to a chain heavy enough to hold a ship, and I had to bend a line onto that of sufficient length to reach bottom—as otherwise it would have dragged down buoy and all—then find a piece of wood to float the end of the line. It took some ten minutes or more before I was ready to let go the chain, and I had just straightened up for a look around when there came from down cove, and pretty well out towards the middle, three distinct flashes of a rifle. It was perhaps twenty minutes since Bob and George had shoved off.

Up to this point I had not really believed that anything serious was afoot. But I knew Bob, and was certain he was not a man to cry "Wolf!" If he wanted help the case must be urgent. Right then I made a decision that seemed so foolish I would not have known what to say if there had been anyone to question it. I lit the running lights and cabin lamps and started down cove with *Daryl* lighted up like an excursion steamer. Where all the circumstances called for secrecy and stealth, something beyond human knowledge told me that the rule for this operation must be boldness. This was no mere hunch: there appeared to be some definite though completely inexplicable compulsion.

I had taken a compass bearing of the rifle flashes. With *Daryl's* ponderous engine roaring at full speed it was not long before I made out the shape of our dory. It was soon alongside and the two in it scrambled on board.

"We had no trouble to see you coming!" Bob remarked.

"Never mind that," I answered. "What did you see?"

"A small vessel—brigantine or brig—anchored close to the west shore. And two whaleboats full of men moving up towards the post under the shadow of the cliffs."

It took a moment to digest that; then I enquired if he could see whether the men were armed.

George said "Yes" at once. Bob added that they had something in their hands but he had not got close enough to make certain.

"But the boats were chock full. There were a lot more men in them than the rowers."

The dory, it seemed, had gone down along the west shore, close in to the cliffs, aided by a strong wind astern. All at once they saw the brigantine at anchor, silhouetted against the northern sky. Then they saw the two whaleboats detach themselves from her and pull in towards the

The 30-foot yawl *Daryl* which the author and his two-man crew brought from Newfoundland to Erik Cove. A silver model of this boat was presented to Mr. Parsons on his retirement in 1940 as the last Fur Trade Commissioner.

shore. At one point the boats were not over one hundred yards away. Bob and George lay on their oars and waited. The rowers were pulling strongly into the gusty head wind, and when the boats had come close to shore they altered course and headed for the apex of the cove—and the post.

Bob let the dory drift until the two boats were out of sight; then he and George pulled as fast as they could out into the cove and fired the warning signal with the rifle.

"We'd best let the factor know right away, sir," said old George. "They boats is half way to the post by now."

"Not on your life," said Bob. "They saw our shots and they've seen *Daryl* come roaring down lit up like a Christmas tree. Maybe that was a smart idea, after all. They don't know what the score is; but it's different from what they figured. The post alerted and a motorboat slashing around. My guess is they're lying doggo, wondering what to do next."

"They outnumber us ten to one," I observed.

"In the boats yes, *but not on the ship.* There can be hardly a soul left on board. And the surest way to bring those boats back is to make a pass at their ship."

"By golly, you're right!" I agreed. "Throw the clutch in: we're going to make a call."

As *Daryl* slid up to the black hull whose tracery of spars and rigging was clearly visible against the night sky I began to wonder what sort of a reception we would get. *Daryl* was still a blaze of light—all but her cockpit where the three of us us huddled nursing our rifles.

It was too dark to make out the name and port of hail on the brigantine's high stern. She lay wrapped in silence. We could see no life upon her deck. But the falls of her starboard davits trailed in the water alongside.

"Ahoy, there!" I sang out in as peremptory a voice as I could muster. "What ship is that?"

There was no answer. We were now not more than fifty feet apart.

"I think, sir, I see the boats," old George whispered. "Headed this way!"

He had wonderful eyes. I could see nothing; but at all events we were sliding up on the brig's starboard side, interposing her hull between ourselves and any possible fire from the boats. Suddenly a cautious voice with a rich Scottish burr came from somewhere forward on the vessel.

"The *Sedy-Santy*, sir, of Dundee."

"The *what*?" I inquired, at the queer name.

"*Sedy-Santy*, sir," it repeated quite distinctly.

There was obviously something fishy about that, but I figured it might be just a Scottish tongue trying to wrap itself around a foreign name. There were more important things to find out at this point.

I dropped my voice to the other's confidential tone:

"Is there anything wrong on board?" I inquired.

"Yes, *sir*!" It was an almost pathetic mixture of vehemence and relief.

"Very well," I replied, with an assumption of confidence I was far from feeling. "Stand by to take a line. I'm coming aboard."

I could feel Bob stir beside me in the cockpit and heard his chuckle. I gave the wheel a half turn and we edged in towards the brig. It wasn't very clear in my mind what would come next—beyond an attempt somehow to carry out my bluff.

But I was spared the effort. We heard the slide of the cabin hatch go back with a slam, then a heavy tread on the quarterdeck, almost over our heads.

"Stand clear, there! Keep away from the side!" bellowed a bull voice. "What do you want of this ship?"

Well, the bluff was called, and effectively, too! The thought flashed through my mind that our poor soul forward had put himself in a bad fix. I hated to let him down. But I hated worse the idea of trying to scramble up over the brigantine's high side with His Nibs for a reception committee, armed or not. Besides, I had no right.

Had I known then what he took us for I might have gone ahead, though disclosure of our true character must immediately have followed. As it turned out, I did unwittingly the best thing, but it was no credit to the intrepid service for which we were all unconsciously masquerading.

"I want to know who you are," I retorted with an attempt at bluster, "and what you are doing, coming in here at night without showing any lights." I referred to sailing lights, of course.

"This is the *Séduisante*, of Dundee," the voice answered in a less belligerent tone. "We came in for fresh water. I didn't think lights required where there's no other ships."

There was a note of sarcasm in this last, but I thought best to skip it. And midnight is a queer time to send off a watering party! Anyhow, that was that.

"Hell!" said Bob.

I felt pretty foolish as we headed back in silence towards the post. But, as matters stood, we had at least drawn the boats back to the ship and frustrated any immediate prospect of a raid. These pirates, if such they were, knew that the post was alerted and that it had reinforcement in the shape of a motorboat of indeterminate force—something that might make landing operations risky. So far, our mission had been a success. In reality, it was far more so than I then knew.

The balance of the night passed quietly. After reporting to Parsons we returned on board *Daryl* and posted an anchor watch. Morning disclosed the brigantine where we had previously seen her. About ten o'clock a whaleboat was spied pulling in for the post. We studied her through the glass and made out two white men in the stern-sheets and a normal number of oarsmen, who were natives. We all rowed ashore. Bob and I, with our rifles, joined the factor on the beach. We felt a little silly when the two white men stepped ashore and greeted Parsons pleasantly. He invited them up to his house. Old George, who spoke Eskimo fluently, engaged the visiting natives in conversation.

In about half an hour Parsons and the two white men returned. One was the owner and the other the master of *Séduisante*. The former, whose voice I recognized though pitched now in a different tone, inquired if we had seen any walrus out in the Strait. I told him there were a number in the vicinity of Salisbury Island.

"Then that's for us," he declared. "We're getting under weigh!"

Erik Cove, where Henry Hudson sent a boat ashore to get water in 1610. The ships are the *N. B. McLean* (left) and *Nascopie*.

And away they did go, with what seemed to me rather undue precipitation, in the teeth of a rising gale. An hour later the *Séduisante*, of Dundee, had vanished into the rain squalls out on the Strait.

The factor inclined to make light of the whole affair. He told us with amusement that we had thrown a scare into the owner because the latter had mistaken *Daryl* for a launch of the R.N.W.M.P. It seemed that he had neglected to secure a Canadian license to hunt walrus! That was the reason he gave for not allowing me on board. At that I felt more foolish still.

But how explain the warning flashes, the two boat loads of men in the dead of night, and the lookout's positive statement that something *was* wrong on board?

Back on *Daryl*, old George shook his head. "Sir," he said, "it was lucky they took us for a 'Mountie' launch."

"Maybe so," Bob admitted. "But why did they shove off in such a hurry after learning their mistake?"

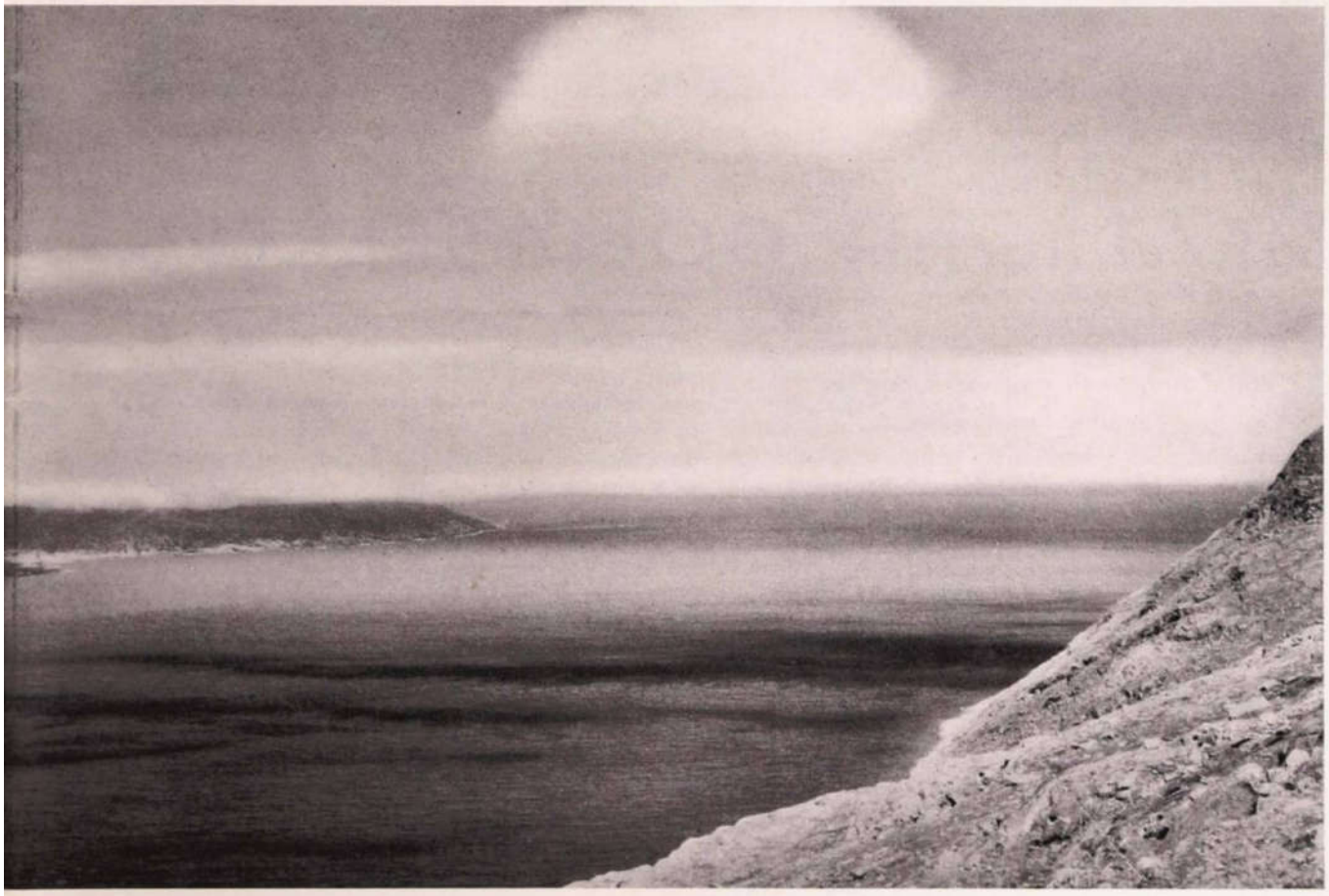
"I don't know, sir. Most likely the factor told 'em the *Pelican* was due any day." Which, in point of fact, she was.

George puffed on his pipe in the manner of one who has not told all he knows. Little by little it came out, not only from George but from some of the post natives who had talked with the whaleboat crew while they waited on the beach. The story was so fantastic that we would have dismissed it as a fabrication (which I believe the factor did) had it not so perfectly fitted the picture of what had just transpired in Erik Cove. These Eskimos from the *Séduisante* stated that they had been shipped on the east coast of Baffin Land for the summer's walrus hunting in the strait, and this part of their story at least I was able later to confirm. The hunting had been poor, but in the course of her cruise up the Strait the ship had come upon the post of a free trader on the Baffin Land side. This was raided and destroyed, and the *Séduisante* sailed away with the furs. This buccaneering venture was not approved by all members of the crew. They were near mutiny, and it was these disaffected members who attempted to forestall a repetition of the outrage by burning matches over the side and giving us warning while entering Erik Cove.

So much for the story. So far as I know, no tangible evidence was ever found to support it. The "free trader," if there was one, simply disappeared, and so, later, did the ill-fated whale ship and her unfortunate crew.

Months later I picked up an item in the New York *Herald* that she had failed to return from the walrus hunting in Hudson's Strait and was given up for lost.

Max Sauer



By a Yukon lake. R. Harrington.

MEAT for the GOLD SEEKERS

by James Cartmel

Reminiscences of a hunter who combined sport with business during the Klondike gold rush.

WHEN the Klondike was discovered, the lucky ones in the mining gamble were far outnumbered by the losers, who had to find other ways of making a living than by scratching gravel. Those of us who had had some experience in hunting and shooting found our opportunity in hunting for the market; for in the first years of the Klondike's existence, the fresh meat consumed by the miners and the people of Dawson came mainly from the big game in the country. Small numbers of cattle and sheep were shipped in, but many a miner would have gone meat hungry if it had not been for the hunters. The authorities, very wisely, realised this and placed no restrictions on the killing of game, principally caribou, which at times could be seen in incredible numbers within fifty miles of Dawson, with moose a close second. In the high ranges where the Klondike river and its branches had their sources, were scattered bands of mountain sheep. Caribou and moose were the principal quarry of the market hunters. The sheep were far scarcer and more difficult to get, and it was mostly for the sake of the sport that we turned our attention to them. And it *was* sport, making up for our bad luck in the mining lottery to no small extent. Not only were we free to hunt the finest game in North America—game that wealthy sportsmen sacrifice months of their time and spend thousands of dollars just to get a shot at—but we had the satisfaction of feeling that not a pound of the meat was wasted, as it is by head hunters. And in addition, if there was no great wealth to be gained, we were making a comfortable living.

Of all North American big game, the mountain sheep takes first place in the eyes of many sportsmen. The head,

with its massive curling horns makes as fine a trophy as any set of moose or elk antlers, besides recalling to the hunter strenuous days on the mountains. For *Ovis Montana* is well named, as his stamping grounds are the highest and most rugged tracts of the mountain system of the western part of the continent. Within these limits their range is very extensive, reaching from the peninsula of Lower California to the shores of the Arctic Ocean in the Canadian Yukon and Alaska.

If the generally accepted classification is correct, there are several distinct species of *Ovis* in North America, and it is a mistake to include them all with *Ovis Montana*, the first of its kind to be seen and described by naturalists. In northern British Columbia are *Ovis Stonei* and *Ovis Fannini* —Stone's and Fannin's sheep. Still further north in central Alaska and Yukon Territory, the beautiful white Dall's sheep—*Ovis Dalli*—is the most common species. The different species or varieties seem to blend with one another the further north they are found, and in the Ogilvie Range which forms the northern boundary of the Klondike valley—our main hunting country—we shot both *Fannini* and *Dalli* in the same band; and at the same time several others, white, but with large patches of dull sooty black on their rumps or sides. It is not uncommon, at least in this district, to find *Ovis Dalli* with a very sparse scattering of single black hairs on their white coats, and I once saw hanging up in a Dawson meat market, a big ram, the reverse of this, entirely black with a few white hairs here and there. On another occasion a ewe was brought in by a hunter which probably would have been classed as a Stone sheep but resembling in general colouration a caribou more than anything else. In colour, it showed a much greater affinity to the true *Ovis Montana* of Colorado or Arizona than to the northern varieties to which it belonged. It might be that eventually these will all come under the heading of *Ovis Montana*.

The mountains of the Ogilvie Range form part of the watershed between the Yukon and Mackenzie Rivers. The highest points run up to eight or nine thousand feet and the nearest of them to Dawson are about fifty or sixty miles away in a straight line. In the winter they are fairly easy of access as the Klondike and its forks make natural roads when frozen. It was while on a caribou hunt in this district that my partner and myself killed our first sheep. Our camp was at the head of one of the big forks of the Klondike in a good sized patch of spruce timber, at the edge of a large natural hay meadow where the creek had its beginning. On each side of it were rounded bare hills, usually dotted with bands of caribou; but at this particular time they had moved out of the neighbourhood, so we decided to take a day off and remain in camp. Shortly after noon we put on our snow shoes and tramped out to the middle of the meadow from where we could see if there were any fresh tracks within range of our field glasses. It was nearing the middle of December and the snow was from two to three feet deep on the level, so it was possible, under certain conditions when the light was favourable, to distinguish tracks several miles away. This will probably sound somewhat far-fetched to the uninitiated and might require a little explanation. Of course, single tracks are invisible at any great distance, when there are only a few inches of snow. But if the snow is so deep that the animals do not lift their feet clearly, the result is a long continuous score that shows up quite plainly on the hillsides, particularly if there are a number travelling in single file and any distance in a straight line.

Directly north from the head of our creek stood one of the higher peaks of the main range. The top was a perpendicular cliff looking like the ruined wall of some ancient castle and appeared quite black in contrast to the steep snow covered slopes beneath it. Rice, my partner, who had been looking it over for some time, suddenly said, "Take a look at the big mountain. I believe there are tracks of some kind just below the top and they might be made by sheep." Turning my field glasses on the spot he pointed out, the usual fine lines, criss-crossing here and there, looking like grey hairs on a white sheet of paper, showed up quite plainly.

We spent the rest of the few remaining hours of daylight snowshoeing out a trail over the low divide at the head of the creek, and across a deep gulch at the base of the mountain along which grew a belt of spruce timber. We knew that no time was to be lost breaking trail in the dark hours of the morning, and we would have to be well up on the mountain in order to take advantage of the four hours of good daylight, which is all the Klondike gets out of the twenty-four in mid-December. This is not saying that there are twenty hours of total darkness. There is a long twilight in the morning and afternoon and the snow reflects enough light so that it is never absolutely impossible to travel at night.

We made an early start the next morning, and just before the sun rose in the south, we were through the timber and at the lower end of a sharp ridge which we had spotted when looking over the mountain the previous day. No breaks or steep drops were noticeable along its length and it looked and proved to be our best road to the top. It was about half a mile to the right of the locality where we had seen the tracks which were in plain view from it when we neared the summit.

Before we were out of the timber the climb became too rough and steep for snowshoes so we exchanged them for "creepers," made of light steel bands with sharp prongs under the ball of the foot and at the heel and fastened on over our moccasins, something like the oldfashioned skates that were strapped on—the crampons of alpinists. Without these it would be impossible to scramble over ice-covered rocks and steep slopes of snow packed hard as stone by the wind. They take the place of the heavy nailed boots usually worn by mountaineers. The December temperatures in the Yukon average about twenty to thirty degrees below zero, dropping to fifty and sixty below when a cold snap comes along. In such weather ordinary leather shoes are out of the question; one's feet would freeze in half an hour. Nothing but soft foot gear, moccasins or the like, can be worn.

Rocky Mountain sheep. These are specimens of *Ovis canadensis;* the white *Ovis dalli* and white-headed *Ovis fannini* of the Yukon mountains have lighter and more graceful horns.
Dan McCowan

Our ridge trail proved all we expected and we made good time climbing up it until near the top when we slowed down and carefully examined the face of the mountain with our field glasses. We were now on about a level with the tracks but they were invisible from our viewpoint and nothing could be seen but the snow-covered slope with a black rock here and there and a thin scattering of leafless bushes, about waist high and grizzled with frost. I was beginning to think that our sheep hunt was a wild goose chase when Rice said, "I believe I saw one of those bushes move." After I had watched it for several minutes through my glasses, it slowly swung around and disclosed the great curling horns of a big ram. Then several other bushes resolved themselves into sheep. There was no cover to take advantage of if we attempted to advance directly towards them, so to make for the top of the mountain, that was only some three or four hundred feet in elevation above us, and follow it along until we were over them was our best plan.

The flat summit that looked like a ruined wall from the meadow, turned out to be one in earnest. It connected our ridge with a similar shoulder of the mountain. The south side was a bare rock face, vertical for its whole length, and about three hundred feet in height. On the north it pitched down at a steep angle and formed the head of a steep gulch. The top was only a foot or two wide, broken and irregular, and at first I thought it was a hopeless proposition. But Rice, who was an experienced mountaineer and a fearless climber, after studying it for a few minutes, thought we could make it.

I had a few bad moments when I would have been quite willing to trade my share in any sheep we might get, for a few square yards of ground that was not standing on edge; but I finally overtook Rice, who was sitting at his ease on the small flat at the end, grinning at my cautious scrambling.

After a short breathing spell we threw back the hoods of our parkas, took off our fur caps (to show as little of our heads as possible) and, lying on our stomachs, peeped over the edge of the bluff. There were our sheep directly below us, fifteen of them. They were about two hundred yards away, at one side of the steeply tilted, snow covered slope, crossed by the lines of tracks that had first attracted our attention. The patch of ground they were on had been swept almost bare of snow by the wind and was dotted by the few bushes covered with frost for which we had mistaken them. A large ram was a little distance from the rest, standing on a rock close to the base of the cliff. Said Rice, "He must be the lookout, and if we don't down him first of all, he will probably lead the others away. You try for him and I'll wait and watch the others."

I slipped my rifle out of its buckskin case in which, Indian fashion, we carried them to keep them clear of snow, raised myself on my elbows and sighted on the shoulder of the ram. There is a tradition or belief among some of the hunters that sheep don't look above them

when on watch, but this one certainly did not follow the rule. The second that my head and the upper part of my body appeared in sight, he swung around and looked up at me. Just as I pressed the trigger one horn got directly in front of the bead of my rifle sight and was cut clean off where it was about two and a half inches thick. But the bullet struck his shoulder and went down through his chest. He dropped where he stood.

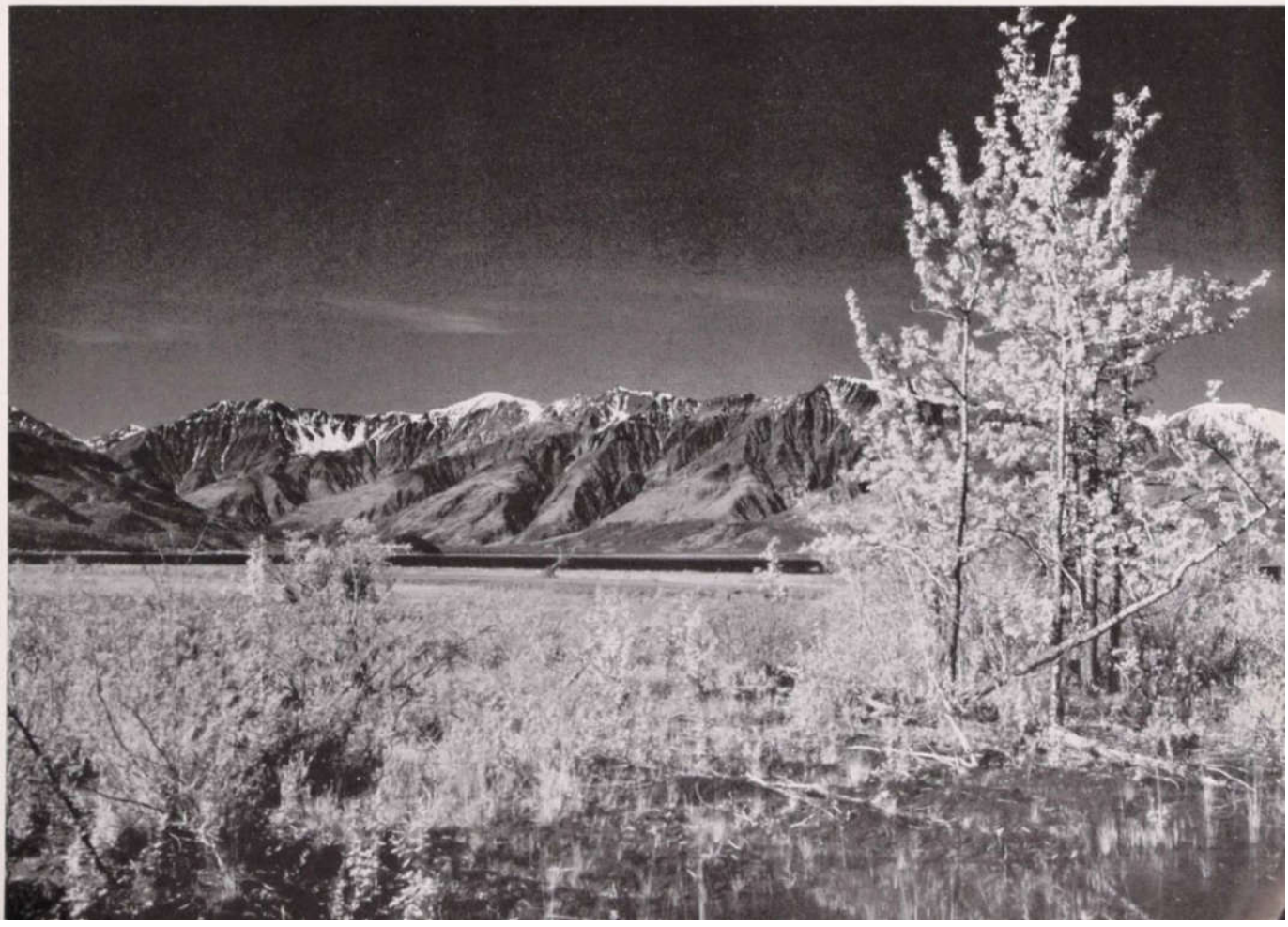
On hearing the shot, the rest, after a few stiff-legged jumps, ran to the top of a small rise, getting in a bunch, and we got in two more shots accounting for a smaller ram and a ewe. Then they scattered, four making for some isolated points of rock further down the mountain, and others running round its shoulder to the right. Rice went after these, while the four, reluctant to leave the steep rocks where they had taken refuge, allowed me to get within easy range. I downed three of them, the last one getting clean away.

The next job was to get the six together. While I was dragging the first one down the hill, Rice appeared towing another big ram. The four rams and five ewes that made up the bag were in good condition and fat, although the wilderness of rocks and snow which is their home does not appear to have a feed for a rabbit in a square mile. After cleaning and getting them in shape for dragging down the hill to the snowshoe trail, we sat down and had lunch.

The December sun, which in that latitude both rises and sets in the south, the sunrise and sunset blending together, was beginning to sink after just skimming over the tops of the jumble of hills on the south side of the Klondike, where the gold creeks head. A few crimson clouds floated over it and the gold and saffron tinted horizon beneath looked more like an August sunset a thousand miles to the southward than one close to the Arctic Circle in midwinter. Overhead, the sky was a hard steely blue, darkening to the north into an arch of sombre black, the shadow of the polar night. We could trace our creek by its lines of dark spruce timber between snow-covered hills until it joined the Klondike, fifty miles away. To the north and east the white peaks of the range turned to the faintest rose pink with their tops glowing in the setting sun. The whole made an unforgettable picture—even in the eyes of two market hunters.

But no time could be wasted admiring the scenery, so, fastening the sheep together with the small ropes we carried, we dragged them down to the timberline. Four days afterwards we were in Dawson with our sheep, and had no difficulty in finding a buyer. Sheep at any time would sell for twice the price of moose or caribou, and we were well paid for our work, while some at least of the citizens of Dawson had mountain mutton for their Christmas dinners.

Yukon country. R. Harrington.



RUNDLE OF EDMONTON

by Helen Tait Alexander

JANGLING loudly above the high stockade gate, the fort bell announced the arrival after months of absence, of the Saskatchewan Brigade. From the lawn of the Big House sometimes called "Rowand's Folly," a small brass cannon boomed, as the Chief Factor, John Alexander Rowand hurried forth to supervise the arrival and to lend dignity to an important scene.

Fort Edmonton blazed into sudden excitement and many of the inhabitants ran pell mell to the river bank. Fires in Bachelor's Hall, always the hub of the fort, were given added fuel. Kitchen fires were stirred to a ruddier glow. Smoke belched from the chimneys; and an enticing smell of good cookery floated down to the hungry nostrils of toiling men, as they came slowly up the bank bearing bundles of precious merchandise to be placed in the warehouses.

Chief Trader John Edward Harriott, usually so prominent on such occasions, was absent that day with his chief clerk, A. W. Pelly, but the son of the Chief Factor—the "Mr. John"—so often mentioned in the Rundle Diary—directed the bustling employees. Above him on a knoll stood John Alexander Rowand himself, never interfering but occasionally roaring out a hearty greeting or a bluff joke to the incoming travellers, while he waited for an important arrival who was to make history as the first chaplain to the H B C at Fort Edmonton, first Protestant missionary to the then "Saskatchewan."

There was an autumnal nip in the air. Leaves whispered falling from the birches as the chief factor stepped forward to give a hearty greeting to Reverend Robert Terrill Rundle, the 29-year old Welsh missionary.

Conducted to Bachelors' Hall where he was shown his place at the dining table, and then sent to his new private quarters, Mr. Rundle beamed with pleasure over the warmth of his welcome. Soon after that moment, he wrote in his still unpublished diary:

"I was greeted by the good, respectable Mr. Rowland, who is Governor at Edmonton and the Upper Saskatchewan; Forts des Montagnes, Carrollton [Carlton] and the Assiniboin."

His diary, begun as the journey started, also records:

"We expected to reach Edmonton early that day [October 17th, 1840], but did not reach there until half past one." It was a surprise to him to find that, though it was a Sunday, "there was no service held that day." He continues:

"Mr. Rowland the gentleman in charge; Mr. Fisher who had ridden over from Fort Pitt, were on hand to give me welcome . . . I was agreeably surprised [by the beauty and comfort] of Fort Edmonton. It is the finest [place] I have yet seen since coming to the country."

Rev. Robert Terrill Rundle, who came to Edmonton House in 1840 as the first Protestant Missionary. F. H. Norbury.

Winter had not yet set in, but Mr. Rundle's heart glowed after his long journey by river and lake, from the east via Lake Winnipeg, Norway House and the Rossville mission settlement, to the difficult entrance to the Saskatchewan river. Therefore he "felt like home," when he saw the fires roaring in Bachelors' Hall at Edmonton.

He was here for eight full years, to raise his hands in benediction; here to bring to long absent young men, the teachings of the Gospel of their childhood.

Directed by the Big Chief himself, Rundle was shown where he was to sit at the U-shaped dining table, informed that the bell would be rung to indicate meal-times, services and prayers, and told that he must be scrupulously punctual. He was further assured that as first missionary to the Saskatchewan every possible assistance would be accorded him for the pursuit of his missionary journeys, and his comfort while in residence at the fort.

Three Wesleyan missionaries had been assigned to the H B C territories by the London Missionary Society, collaborating with the Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, in London. They were Rev. George Mason destined for Lac la Pluie and Osnaburgh House; Rev. William Barnley for Rat Portage (Kenora) and Fort Alexander, and Rev. R. T. Rundle for Fort Edmonton.

Sailing from Liverpool on March 14, 1840, they made a "fast" voyage to New York in 26 days, "aboard the good ship *Sheridan*, a superb vessel of 1050 tons, carrying 400 passengers."

After a four-day visit at the Astor House, the three young men, though much impressed with the grandeur, the rush and bustle of the American metropolis of that day, were anxious to push on to Montreal. They arrived there on Good Friday and "here we saw the British flag flying once more." In deference to the sanctity of that day, they rested for twenty-four hours, then pushed on until the three of them parted at Lac la Pluie, "Bro. Mason's resting place."

Rundle is next found busily engaged in learning the Cree syllabics, after being welcomed at Norway House by Rev. James Evans who, as General Superintendent of Wesleyan Missions in H B C territory, wished to go off on an exploratory journey as far as York Factory.

"I was persuaded to stay until Fall," Rundle writes, but before long, though he baptised, conducted the first marriage of two Indian converts, buried, and taught the Gospel, he began to worry as to how he was to proceed on his journey to Edmonton. However, he stayed, doing valiant work in the Indian village of Rossville, which was not far from the H B C fort of Norway House. While he was there he practiced diligently the art of cutting the Cree syllabics in wood with his penknife—Chief Factor Donald Ross, his wife and daughter Jane directing him—from July until September.

Meantime, he remembered the advice given to the three young missionaries including himself, by the London Missionary Society before he left England. He was told never to express an opinion about incidents or happenings at the forts, of which he did not approve. He was told:

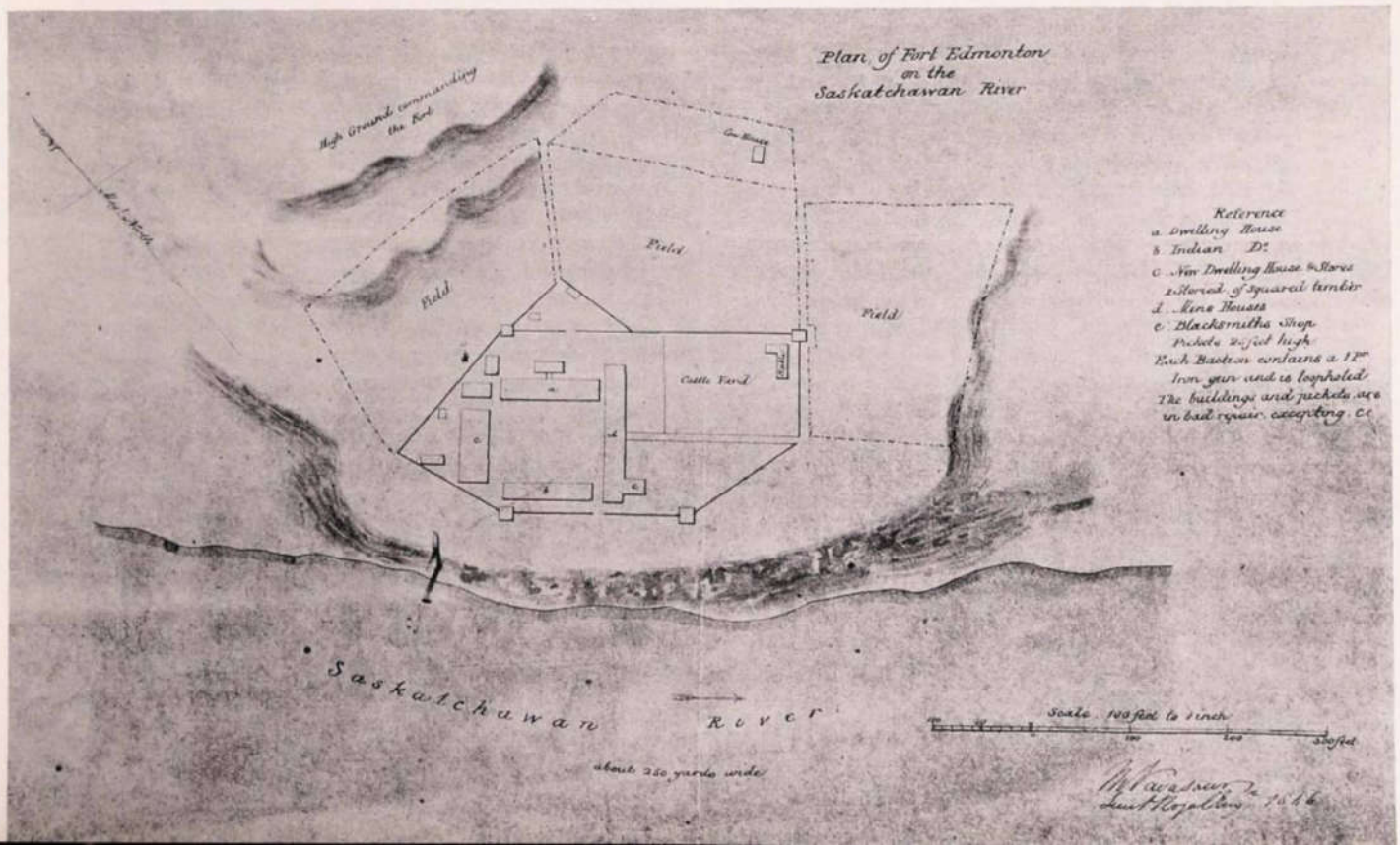
"Keep at the utmost distance from all trifling and levity in your intercourse with young persons, more especially with females. Take no liberties with them—converse with them very sparingly, and only for religious purposes, and even then do not converse with them alone. Beware of the half cast females, the daughters of Europeans by native women."

After several weeks at Norway House, he says he had difficulty in obtaining a canoe, then an express canoe appeared. It carried Mrs. Evans and "William" whose relationship is not defined, and when Chief Factor Ross saw it coming he expressed the fear that it might be the harbinger of news that war had broken out between America and England.

Though he led a busy life during his stay at Norway House, though he was pleased with the results of his teaching, Rundle was most anxious to set off on his journey to the field to which he had been assigned. To ease his anxiety the Ross family planned some small entertainments to divert him. However, his thoughts revolved continuously around his chosen work and no consideration was ever given to its relinquishment. Nevertheless, looking back over a century, the emolument paid him by the London Missionary Society of £6.10 per quarter, with £1.10 additional for stationery and laundry, seems incredibly small.

A note of simple enjoyment is infused into the record of his outing on August 26th, which the Rosses arranged

Plan of Fort Edmonton in 1846 by Lieut. Vavasour. Building "c" is Rowand's "Big House." From the original in the H B C archives.



for him. Two Indian girls were sent with the picnic party as handmaidens, also a Métis canoeman to row the boat to the picnic ground. Rundle writes: "A picnic was held today on an island in company with Mrs. Evans and Miss [Jane] Ross, Mr. Finlayson nephew of the Governor of Red River and myself. . . . A picnic in the wilds of North America. Surely that is worthy of record!"

September 6 was Rundle's last day at Norway House when, to his surprise and delight, the Saskatchewan Brigade came along and brought a special canoe for his use. The flotilla usually consisted of York boats laden with merchandise. The route of the Saskatchewan Brigade passed through Lake Winnipeg to the difficult portage at Grand Rapids where the Saskatchewan river was entered. This was a most exciting experience for the young missionary who, though he was tormented by great swarms of sandflies and mosquitoes, seemed to be in an exalted mood.

At Cumberland House a lobstick was cut for him and on this tufted tree he carved his initials and made the Sign of the Cross: "Why shouldn't Protestants use that Holy Sign?" he queries in his diary. When he left he was given a large quantity of potatoes and flour to carry him to his destination, in addition to other welcome supplies.

The long river journey was continued to "Carrollton" House, but a terrible windstorm arose, with accompanying thunder and lightning, which caused the brigade to camp on the river bank "between two fires" just before reaching that fort. "And my coat was frozen board-stiff in the morning," writes the missionary.

Mr. Rundle's first concern, once he got established at Fort Edmonton, was the education of the children, so he started both day and Sunday Schools and mentioned in his diary that "one of my best pupils is little Miss Peggy" —the ten-year-old daughter of the then Chief Trader J. E. Harriott. Both adults and children attended his Sunday schools and services. In teaching the Crees and Stoneys who gathered to hear him, he preached outside the Fort. Occasionally he had difficulty with his interpreters, until he mastered the native tongues.

Then he planned his missionary journeys, covering a wide field that extended to "Little" Slave Lake (now called "Lesser") in the North, and south to the Rocky Mountain region of Banff. Thus he was really the first Protestant preacher to be engaged in mission work that extended south to the Bow River as well as in the Saskatchewan district.

His name has been preserved for posterity at the wish of the Indians, "Rundle's Singing Crees," to whom he taught his beloved Welsh hymns—in the sloping crag above Banff, Alberta. This, because he was the first white man to camp there. He did not climb Mount Rundle, but camped under Mt. Cascade, in company with his faithful companion William who usually travelled with him. Sir James Hector in the diary included in the Government Blue Books of the Palliser Expedition, records the naming of that mountain in his honour in 1858, while it is officially recorded in the Palliser map of 1859.

Rundle liked his work and was eager to be off on his travels. The Company was compliant, inasmuch as it had officially agreed to supply him with all he needed: clothing, dogs for his sleds and his carriole, a horse, canoe, and all other accoutrements, including a gun which he once used to shoot a buffalo.

Soon after he got settled at Edmonton, he went off on a journey to "Hunter's Camp," and was prepared for this trip by an issue of clothing from the fort store. The clergyman's clothing in which he had arrived was quite inadequate for travel in which the temperature often dropped to 40° below zero, and he was obliged to wear:

"A sealskin cap with ties; lamb's wool stockings under moccassins; flannel shirt under woollen drawers to the foot; thick lined trousers and black silk gaiters; a waistcoat, a coat and a pilot coat." Gloves too, of course; and over his sealskin cap, "a shawl tied securely around the neck to prevent the wind blowing it away. There was also a buffalo robe and blankets in the cariole, which was drawn by great dogs."

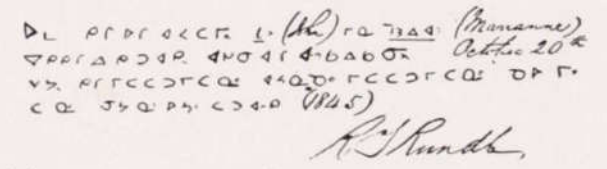
On his return to Edmonton he wrote about the food supplies there, though throughout his diary he speaks distressingly of the constant starvation he finds during his missionary journeys. That can be explained by the improvidence of both the Indians and the Métis, who gorged and wasted, when food was plentiful, and starved when there was none. At Fort Edmonton, however, as a rule no one needed to starve, for that important post as the entire entrepôt of the huge district known as "The Saskatchewan" served several trading posts.

Great pits were dug for the preservation of food. Large blocks of ice were cut from the frozen river and placed in these pits, being covered with straw or hay. It is on record that many hundreds of buffalo were kept fresh by this primitive sort of refrigeration, along with the carcasses of other big game, though of course much pemmican was made. The flesh of the buffalo mixed with berries, was put into the buffalo hide and buried in the ground.

In the pits were also thousands of migratory birds which came down from the Arctic in the fall, to be shot by a corps of hunters waiting for this annual migration on the river banks, with their long guns. Another group of hunters was usually out in the field with carts, or sleighs, to shoot and bring home the meat of which the Rundle diary often speaks.

After spending the summer of 1843 among the Stoneys and Crees he returned to Edmonton; went for a short stay to Rocky Mountain House; came back to Edmonton again. Even during the rigours of a terribly severe winter, he kept in monthly touch with his poverty-stricken native parishioners, even at outlying points. This was a prodigious

Certificate in Cree syllabic of a marriage solemnized at Edmonton, Oct. 20, 1845.



"Rowand's Folly," the big house in Fort Edmonton as it appeared in the early 1870's. Chas. Horetzky (?)

task which he kept up for eight years, but according to unpublished letters of his daughter, Miss Mary Rundle, he deeply regretted that, being a frail man, he had to give it up and return to England in 1848 after eight long years of missionary labour.

While Rundle had the mission field to himself for some time, he records his pleasure on meeting that witty Belgian priest, Rev. Pierre Jean De Smet, S.J., who endured terrible experiences during his missionary life in America, before he decided to go north into the territory of New Caledonia and over the mountains in search of the Blackfeet. De Smet was often the honoured guest by the brick fireplace in the Big House where he made the Rowand girls shriek with laughter over his stories—as he also did on other nights in Bachelor's Hall. Even Rundle, quaintly solemn and earnest in his mission as he was, laughed heartily over these tales.

Rundle records his pleasure in the company of De Smet, during his stay at Edmonton: "Never has a Catholic priest and a Wesleyan Missionary met and parted on such good terms . . . He never interfered with my Indians at all . . . He offered me a letter [of introduction] to his brother in Belgium."

Of all the witty tales related by De Smet, derived from his wanderings all over America—for he had been two decades at least, out in the mission field—the favourite one at Edmonton was this:

During a mission trip through Jasper De Smet met up with a young man known to be a notorious Indian thief. He came to the priest, asking to be blessed. De Smet asked him if he was ready for such a thing. He confessed that once he had taken "two dolla" from the pocket of the Calvinistic minister's coat. The father told him that he could not be blessed until he returned the money he stole. So he went off to seek Mr. Rundle.

"What do you want?" asked Rundle when the man stood before him.

"Me one-time tak' money from your coat. Me geeve it back."

"Very well," said the preacher taking the money. "Go, and sin no more."

But the Indian did not go. The missionary was puzzled, "You've given me my money," he said, "Isn't that all ?"

"No, not all," said the man. "I want paper."

"I do not understand," said Rundle, " . . . Oh, a receipt? But you do not need a receipt. You've given me back the money."

"Me want paper," persisted the Indian. "Me go widout paper. Knock on St. Peter gate. He shak' de 'ead. I no can go in widout paper."

"But what do you want a paper *for*?" asked the preacher.

"Don' you see?" exclaimed the Indian impatiently, "Me young, you old. You die first. Den I die. Can't go all round *Hell* lookin' for you!"

The beaver lives in a one room house, not a duplex. And he does not use his tail as a stoneboat. An engraving from Audubon's picture of the American Beaver. W. H. Coverdale Colln.

ANIMAL MYTHOLOGY

You don't have to go back to the 18th century for weird ideas about wild animals.

Story and Photos
by Dan McCowan

READERS of the June *Beaver* must have chuckled at the quaint 18th-century ideas about Canada's birds and beasts published in "Mr. Guthrie's Unnatural History"; and yet in this mid-20th century plenty of people have ideas about our wild creatures that are quite as fantastic. For instance, by the same mail which brought the June issue of this magazine to my desk, I received a clipping from an Alberta newspaper which told of a forest warden having discovered a three-storey beaver house. The ground floor was occupied by the beaver family, the second by a group of muskrats, and the attic by a pair of mink and their most recent litter. Wonderful!

As architects and builders the beaver clan has been somewhat over-rated; in fact the tiny hummingbird displays far greater skill in her building projects. You may have read that a beaver house consists of living room, dinette and bed-rooms. Not so—the interior of any one of these lodges is simply a small, dark, stuffy cave formed of short billets of poplar wood roughly daubed with mud. Although more of a prison than a home, particularly in winter, it nevertheless then foils such housebreakers as the wolverine and the wolf.

Most of the spurious stories about the beaver have to do with the large, flat, paddle-like tail. Used chiefly as a rudder and occasionally slapped loudly on the surface of the water to sound an alarm when danger threatens, the tail of this aquatic rodent is neither plasterer's trowel nor stoneboat—as is frequently alleged. Nor does the double

claw on one toe of the hind foot serve as toothpick when a sliver of poplar wood lodges firmly in teeth or gums. It may possibly be of use in combing the fur coat but of that I have no first hand knowledge.

That the porcupine is a member of the Ancient and Honourable Company of Archers is a widespread belief. However, much as one would like to catch these prickly creatures in the act of casting a wicked dart, the fact remains that deliberate shooting of quills from any part of the body is a mythical performance. When Porky, in the act of tree climbing, is molested, the muscular tail, a fearsome weapon, is freely brandished. Coming in contact with the tree bole or with branches, a number of quills are thereby dislodged and these, falling to the ground, are mistakenly thought to have been discharged on purpose.

The fisher, a species of over-sized marten, is perhaps the one creature in the Canadian woods capable of successfully coping with the porcupine as prey. Quills embedded in the flesh or even swallowed by this tree-climbing weasel are apparently harmless. But the oft-repeated story of the fisher evading the bludgeon of Porky by studied approach under cover of a deep mantle of snow, and thence reaching the soft and unarmed belly of the unsuspecting victim, is pure fiction.

Fiction of a more obvious sort concerns the fabulous creature called Side-Hill Gouger. When strangers to the region are present this lop-sided mammal forms a fruitful subject for camp-fire conversation in the Rockies. It is described as having legs markedly longer on one side of the body than on the other, a physical development designed to enable the creature to traverse steep hillsides at high speed and in comparative comfort. Unfortunately this strange animal is obliged to continue circling a mountain in but one direction—clockwise or counter-clockwise depending on which side of the body the shorter limbs are placed. It is said that should it attempt to travel in the opposite direction ponderous avalanches may thereby be set in motion.

Although down through the years the Side-Hill Gouger has been considered as a purely North American quadruped, it appears that direct ancestors of this eccentric mythical beast were to be found at large in England five hundred years ago. One gathers that on these pure-bred British gougers the legs were consistently longer on the starboard than on the port side. A bygone natural historian, probably with tongue in cheek, noted that, "It has legs not equal on the two sides but shorter on the left side so that, planting the feet of the right side in deep ruts made by wagon wheels, it runs valiantly and thus escapes its pursuers."

The black bear has for long been victim of what one might charitably call inaccurate reporting. Thus, through-

According to legend, the bear can keep himself alive for four months by sucking his paws.

Flying squirrels don't fly—they merely glide.

out North America, there is no other large mammal around which so luxuriant a crop of fable has sprouted and ripened. For instance, Bruin, when almost overtaken by sleep in late autumn, is said to eat freely of the outer bark of spruce, pine, fir or cedar trees. This rind, (quite lacking in food value) is, so the story goes, vital to the welfare of the shaggy woodland dwellers. Being practically indigestible it remains in the stomach of the drowsy inactive bear throughout the long winter, and in the form of a ball prevents adhesion in the walls of the otherwise empty paunch. As a matter of fact, occasional material found within the stomach of a black bear killed in mid-winter is simply coarse vegetable matter eaten perhaps for supper in early November, and retained until the yawning animal breakfasts off the bulbs of avalanche lilies in late April.

Another droll yarn about the black bear, often repeated, is that these animals obtain nourishment during the annual season of famine by sucking their own paws. One paw is said to sustain an adult bear for one calendar month (a thirty day sucker, so to speak) and the duration of winter sleep is governed by the number of paws in stock on Thanksgiving Day. No wonder that owls hoot, and loons laugh!

When the sun has set and twilight merges into dusk, the "flying" squirrels venture forth from their habitations in the hearts of hollow trees. Although notably air-minded, these denizens of the deep woods are nevertheless unable to fly. But they knew all about gliding long before mankind took to the air, and on gliders of skin, purposely attached to and, on occasion, stretched between wrists and ankles, they swoop in graceful curves from one tree top to another. The flat bushy tail then serves as a rudder by means of which the animal is enabled to avoid obstacles in course of flight, or perhaps to dodge the talons of night-hunting owls.

Lacking the presence of the bustling gopher many beasts of prey on the western prairies—such as the badger and coyote—would fare but poorly during summer months. Gophers resident in areas devoid of stream or lake are popularly believed to dig deep wells in order to reach water and to slake their thirst. Actually these rodents are confirmed "drys," capable of existing without even a dew drop in arid regions and in the most torrid weather. Starchy food converted to liquid in the stomach prevents the burrowing little animals from becoming too badly de-hydrated.

The smallest mammal in this country, and for that matter in the whole wide world, is the shrew, a tiny mouse-like creature with a somewhat square tail and a pugnacious disposition. Down through the centuries, in lands afar, much un-natural history or lore concerning the shrew has been bequeathed by one generation to another. For example, should one of these pigmy animals gain access to a wine cellar and there scamper over the bottles in the bins, it was deemed certain to sour the entire vintage. Likewise, entering a stable or cow barn, its evil influence was manifested by a subsequent outbreak of disease amongst horses or cattle housed therein. From this source comes the word "beshrew," meaning a curse or plague. In conclusion one might remark that such malevolent behaviour on the part of the shrew is quite as fanciful as that pigs can see the wind, that cats have nine lives, and that a cow jumped over the moon.

Gophers are confirmed "drys." They don't burrow for water, as is popularly supposed.

Christmas at Moose Factory

Photographs by J. D. Barnell

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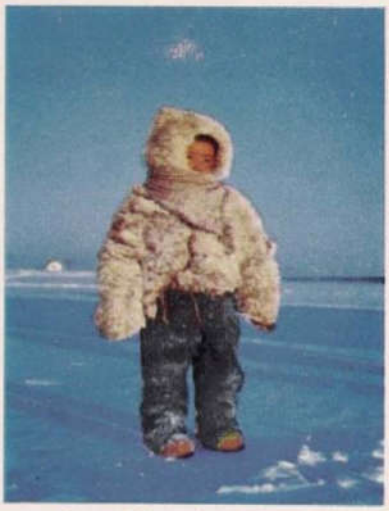


Santa Claus hasn't so far to come . . .

NEW Year's Day is a time to look forward; but Christmas is a time to look back, remembering old friends, and the Christmas delights of childhood. At Moose Factory—founded one hundred and seventy years before Dickens wrote of Marley in his *Christmas Carol*—the Yuletide activities must surely be attended by ghosts from many generations, who have celebrated the ancient festival there in days gone by.

Below: Young Indian mothers bring their babies to the Roman Catholic Mission and kneel before the creche of Bethlehem, built of miniature logs. Father Bilodeau watches over them.

The interior of a modern trading store is so prosaic that the photographer may be forgiven for introducing a few unlikely props. The house flag off some old Company ship comes from the post museum, and the skins from the fur warehouse. The trapper holds some fox pelts, while Post Manager Ron Duncan in his Sunday suit examines some beaver skins.

One recalls that, well over two hundred Decembers ago, the warmth of the Christmas celebrations at Moose became so intense that the fort went up in flames; which caused one James Duffield to write in the journal on December 25, 1741: "At Noon gave each Mess a bottle of Wine & in the evening a gallon pot of strong beer to celebrate the happy time—At 8 saw them all to bed, not forgetting the Conflagration six years past."

More of the original spirit of Christmas is evident in the Moose journal of six years later: "Spent the Day in Religious Exercise" wrote John Potts, "and to prevent hard Drinking I did Read over to them one of the Little Books Your Honrs. [The Governor and Committee] was pleased to Send us Last Year; wch. is a Disswasive from the Sin of Drunkenness, I gave them a Little Liqur. in the Evening and at Eight O Clock Ordered all hands to bed and the Lights out."

When Moose Factory became the residence of the governor of the Southern Department of Rupert's Land about 130 years ago, the Yuletide festivities doubtless took on a more formal character. And with the erection of a Church of England mission there in 1851, the fur traders and their families were able to celebrate the Christian festival in the time-hallowed way.

Moose Factory, founded in 1673, is older than any of the other posts marked here, except Rupert's House immediately to the northeast of it.

Below: To the old post on the banks of the frozen Moose River, two modern aircraft bring passengers and presents from the south. On the shore the schooner *Repulse* is seen hauled up for the winter.

Before the coming of the railway to Moosonee across the river, Christmas was observed as a day of church going and family feasting. From near and far, the Indians came in for the holiday season, bringing their furs to trade at the post. New Year's Day, in the Scottish manner, was the festive day, when the inhabitants would be wakened early by the roar of *feux de joie* from a score of guns, when a round of visits would be paid beginning with the Anglican missionary and the H B C district manager, and when the Company staged a big dance for the natives at night. Of these traditional observances, little remains today but private celebrations, and the crash of fusillades in the winter darkness.

Local residents have seen some rapid changes come to Moose Factory in the last few years, including a large Government hospital.

Below: The clerk of the post, Oliver Chum, helps load up a trapper's sled while Manager Duncan keeps tally.

Cree women and children with their puppies. Dom. Govt.

RED MEN'S POW-WOW

by R. C. Merifield

NEVER will I forget my first glimpse of Waterhen Lake on that Sunday afternoon in June many years ago. After paddling for days along rivers, some wide, others narrow and winding, our five canoes suddenly emerged from the narrow Waterhen River and glided out over the glassy waters of the lake, like five smooth sailing ducks. The afternoon was sunny, yet not hot, the forest was as green as only a forest in northern Canada can be in the leafy month of June. The mirror-like lake stretched away ahead as far and farther than the eye could see. After the shoals and rapids of the little river the scene was one of charm and peace. All afternoon our Indians paddled towards its end. Away on the horizon I could discern a low fringe of green, what appeared to be an island. As we came nearer the trees gradually took shape, and to my amazement I thought I could hear rhythmic drumming, very faintly at first, as of distant tom-toms. Presently I could see above the tree-tops colored bunting apparently decorating tall poles. After days and days in the wilderness of forest and stream, the effect of the sound of drums and the gay decorations gave one the impression of a country fair. I then realized we were approaching the famous spot where for many generations the tribes of redmen had held their religious festivals in the month of June.

The sun was getting low over the western water as we drew into the shadow of the forest and neared the beach. As our canoes passed by the Indians' fishing nets our canoemen lifted one of them out of the water and disengaged several perfect specimens of whitefish which were to provide us with a supper. The scene was one of indescribable beauty and peacefulness. From the depths of the forest came the beat of the never-ceasing tom-toms. Immediately before us lay a beach of the cleanest, whitest sand I have ever seen, backed by the fresh green of the forest. Being only nineteen at the time my youthful imagination vividly called up stories I had read of explorers visiting South Sea Islands. The tom-toms and the white beach made it very realistic. And in truth, we were visiting the scene of generations of pagan festivals. No one knows for how long this spot had served as a meeting place for the summer ceremonials of the Indians. And the present was simply a repetition of the old traditional feasts.

The year was 1913 and our party consisted of the Inspector of Indian Agencies for Northern Saskatchewan, his daughter who was signed on as clerk, and myself as general handyman. The purpose of the expedition was to attempt to make a treaty with these Indians, and have them choose lands for their reservations, while they still had a choice of fishing waters, hunting grounds and trapping areas. The nearest survey was near Meadow Lake, away to the south, but each year brought the government surveyors nearer and with them the white man's settlements.

Our five canoes with ten Indian canoe-men were provided by the Hudson's Bay Company, who also supplied our provisions, tents and equipment. Pulling up on the beach our Indians soon had a couple of tents erected and a big camp fire blazing brightly. On this particular evening, after a fare of bannock and bacon for days, the freshly caught whitefish cooked over the open fire had just the smoky tang required to make it the most appetizing feast I remember.

Shortly after supper we were visited by a group of the finest specimens of Indians I had ever seen. They were chiefs of the various tribes who were gathered here for the festival. There were some Chippewas, Sioux, and Wood Crees. These men were clean-cut, dignified, courteous. It took only a glance to recognize nobility, nature's gentlemen. They were as yet unspoiled by the white man.

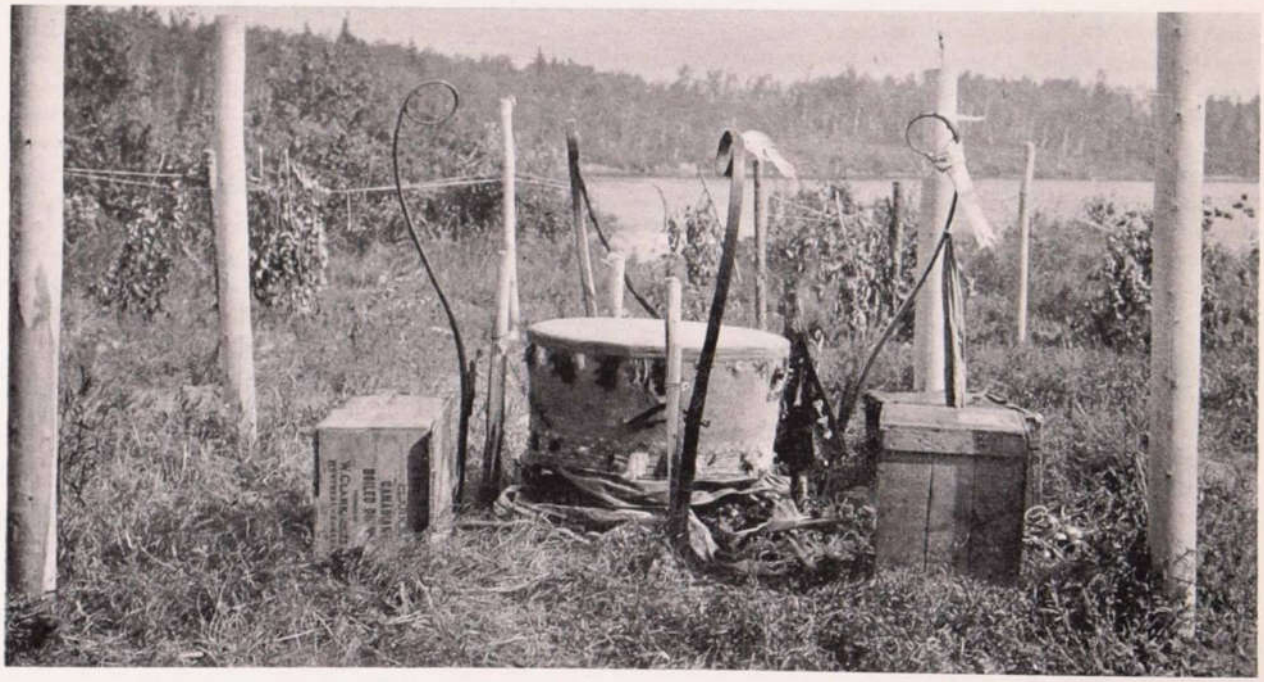
With them was an interpreter whom the inspector had engaged some days before at Green Lake where we had spent several days. He was Mr. Campbell, manager of Revillon Frères' fur trading post there. A Scotsman, he had a fiery red beard and hair, and was I think one of the biggest men I have ever seen, tall, broad and thick, without a pound of fat. With his deep, booming voice and his impressive but kindly manner, Mr. Campbell was a man greatly respected in all that land.

Through the interpreter the chieftains, one by one, with consummate grace and dignity, invited our party to visit them at their camp in the centre of the island and take part in their festivals.

Our hosts disappeared silently into the depths of the forest from whence they had come, and after a reasonable time the inspector, his daughter and I followed. The woods were so dense that I doubt if one could have made one's way through them by any other way than the path which we followed. It was as smooth as a pavement, worn so by generations of moccasinned feet. The twilight of the long June evening had settled over the scene, and in the dense woods it was almost dark. After possibly five minutes' walk, we suddenly emerged into an open space, and there was revealed to us a sight which even now, after thirty-seven years, is as vivid in my memory as on that lovely evening.

The open area was circular in shape, comprising possibly two or three acres of level grass land surrounded completely by the dense forest of evergreens and poplars. All around at the edge of the clearing the wigwams nestled beneath the great trees. Scores of little camp fires in front of the wigwams were tended by children, and squaws busily engaged with the domestic duties of the evening. Little children laughed and played, rolling and squealing just as children do the world over. Near the centre of the clearing sat three or four Indians, crosslegged, beating tom-toms in a monotonous rhythm. Clasping hands, possibly one hundred or more Indians, men and women circled around and around in a sort of dance. Near the dancing group was a large fire, around which were six or seven boys, ten to twelve years of age. Every once in a while one of the tom-tom players would stop his drumming, and without even glancing toward the group of boys around the fire, would hurl his tom-tom in their general direction. Never once did a tom-tom hit the ground. A boy scampered out and under it and, whisking it quickly

Ceremonial drum used by the Swampy Cree. R. A. Talbot.



over the flames, would warm it up, meanwhile beating it with a drum-stick and cocking an ear to hear its tone as the heat tightened the skin. When tuned to his satisfaction away he would run and toss it back to the drummer.

As daylight faded, and the green of the woods changed to black, the glow of scores of camp-fires threw a weird light over the nearby forest and made its dark recesses more than ever romantic. We wended our way back to our camp on the beach, but the beauty of that scene was indelibly impressed on my mind. The tom-toms scarcely ceased day or night during the five days we remained there. Next day our Indians under the direction of the inspector erected our large meeting tent in preparation for the conferences with the chiefs and head men of the tribes. In the afternoon, a halt was called in their religious festivals in deference to the inspector's invitation to attend the meeting. The chiefs were seated in places of honour near the inspector, Mr. Campbell and the mounted policeman, who had come from Green Lake to act as guard, as we had several thousand dollars in one and two dollar bills for the purpose of paying treaty if the tribes accepted.

British and Canadian flags were draped about the tent, and on a folding table were displayed the medals which would be presented to each chief and head man. The medals for the chiefs were huge, about three inches in diameter and at least three sixteenths of an inch thick. Each bore on one side an engraving of King George V and on the other an inscription recording the occasion.

The inspector opened the meeting welcoming the redmen on behalf of the Great White Father over the sea. He told them the Great White Father had sent us with presents of flour and bacon to his friends at Waterhen Lake. The chiefs in turn gratefully acknowledged these and welcomed the white men to their midst. Very ceremoniously, a large pipe of peace was filled, lighted, and passed around to all who were taking part in the proceedings.

At first things looked favourable for bringing these people under the treaty and establishing them on good reservations. As the afternoon wore on, however, and during the meetings of the days that followed, it became increasingly evident that something had gone wrong. The young men wanted the treaty. Their wives were attracted by the goods which had laboriously been hauled overland by the Hudson's Bay Company and Revillon Frères in anticipation of good business when the Indians would receive their money. But the older chieftains became glum, even sullen. Their speeches became more and more angry, although always eloquent. At last things reached a point where they would clench their fists in anger as they spoke and finally they announced definitely that they would have none of the treaty. Once again this group of tribes had refused. Their argument of course was that from time immemorial the redman had owned all this land, so why then did the Great Father now come and offer them only a small portion here and a small portion there?

But there was a deeper reason for this particular rejection. Mr. Campbell, who knew these people like a father knows his children, enlightened us as to what had caused the change in the attitude of the chiefs. It seems the foreman of our canoemen was an Indian strange to these parts, and what was more important, he was a medicine man. He originally had come from the north, near the Barren Lands, and a year or so before had got into a quarrel with one of the Indians of these tribes. In the heat of the quarrel, being a medicine man, he had cast a spell, or as the Indians say, "put bad medicine" into his adversary. The man had gone out, as is the custom of the Indians, to carry on the winter's trapping, but luck had been constantly against him. He could shoot nothing, he could catch nothing, and eventually died out on his trap lines, from starvation. Naturally, the Waterhen tribes were resentful, in fact hostile towards this medicine man. This explained several things we had been puzzling about since our arrival at Waterhen. During the trip we had remarked on the superior appearance and manner of this foreman of ours. He was neat, quick of movement, and very efficient. From the time we landed here, however, he had been different. He was very quiet and never left the camp. Apparently he was afraid of revenge on the part of the Waterhen Lake Indians, for the loss of one of their members. And so it was bad blood brought about by this act of Indian "sorcery" which was the real cause of the rejection of the treaty of 1913.

During the days we were here, however, outside the meetings, the Indians were perfect hosts to us white men. We were invited to one of the most important of their religious feasts, the Feast of the Pheasants. On this occasion, only the chiefs did the dancing. Each chief did a dance by himself. Some of them were very dramatic, and while I of course could not understand the chant which accompanied the dance, I could almost follow the drama of the hunt, or of war, by the actions of the dancer, and the expression of his features. At times the emotions of the dancer would become almost overpowering and he would froth at the mouth, and at the end of the dance would sink down exhausted.

At the Feast of the Pheasants, all through the afternoon, great iron pots had been boiling over large fires. I watched them seethe and bubble as bits of meat, herbs and what looked like chips and trash rose to the surface and then disappeared again in the depths of the boiling cauldron. When the dances of the chiefs had ended each one of us had to partake of the contents of the big kettles. I was not eager to swallow any of this concoction but I reasoned that all this boiling must surely have sterilized whatever was in it. It turned out that it tasted quite good and I later found out that it contained pemmican, raisins, and many herbs.

Although our mission had been unsuccessful our stay among these people was extremely pleasant and very interesting to me. At length after five days and nights of tom-toms beating out their rhythm almost without a break, we packed up and regretfully bidding goodbye to these fine redmen, moved out once again over the placid surface of the lake.

CANADA'S WILD FUR CROP

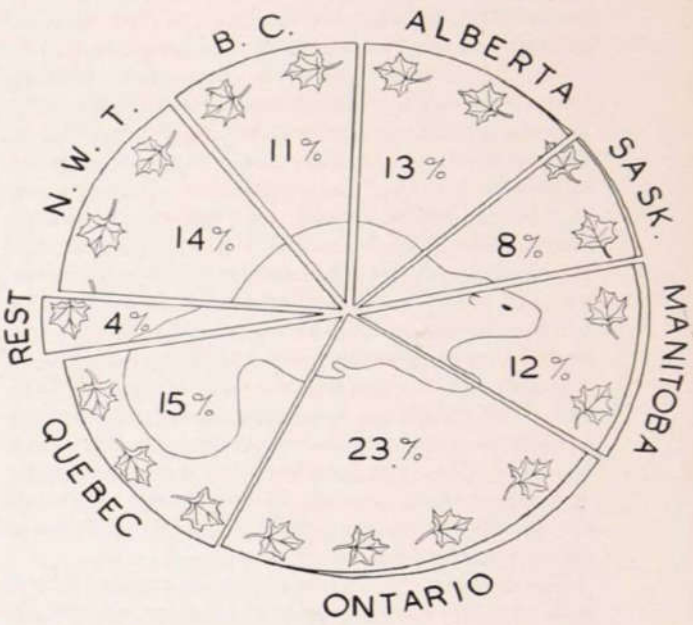
What animal produces our most valuable fur crop? And what is the most valuable pelt? You'll be surprised when you read the answers here.

by Leonard Butler

Charts by Elizabeth Cormack

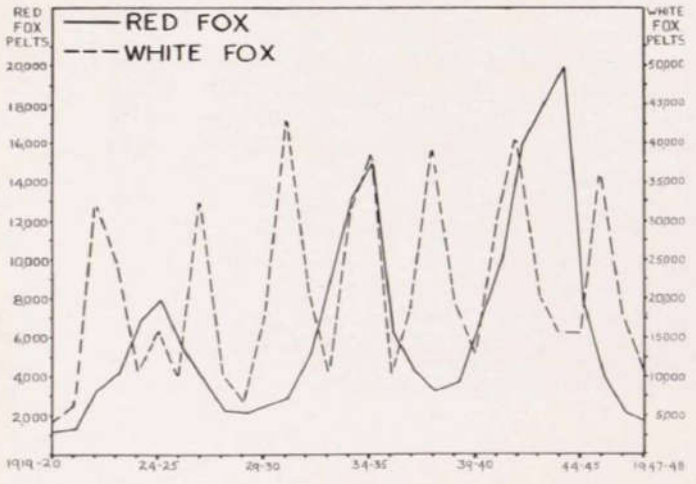
IF someone asked you what was the most valuable fur in Canada, what would you say? The mink, the beaver, or the marten? Few people would think that the most valuable wild fur crop to-day is composed of common muskrat pelts, and fewer still would believe that the top average price over the past thirty years was fetched by the little known fisher. The mink coat, for instance, is considered about the last word in elegant expensiveness; yet the mink pelt is away down in tenth position on the price list of individual skins, and the annual crop of wild pelts is less valuable than either the muskrat or the beaver.

A study of the apparently dull statistics of the Canadian fur industry, as published by the Dominion Government, shows moreover that the price per pelt and the number of pelts fluctuate greatly, from year to year. Pelt prices appear to be dictated by fashion and largely independent of supply. Likewise the annual crop is not greatly influenced by prices except in the more settled areas, or in the case of a disproportionately low price for one particular kind of fur. For instance if fur prices are low, then trappers will fish or cut pulpwood and railway ties instead of trapping, if these occupations are more remunerative. Such alternative jobs are only available in the more accessible regions while the greater part of the north country is dependent on the fur crop. Here the policy is to trap whatever animals are available irrespective of price, although greater effort may be exerted for more valuable furs, and less valuable ones may be discarded or utilized by the trapper for his own use.

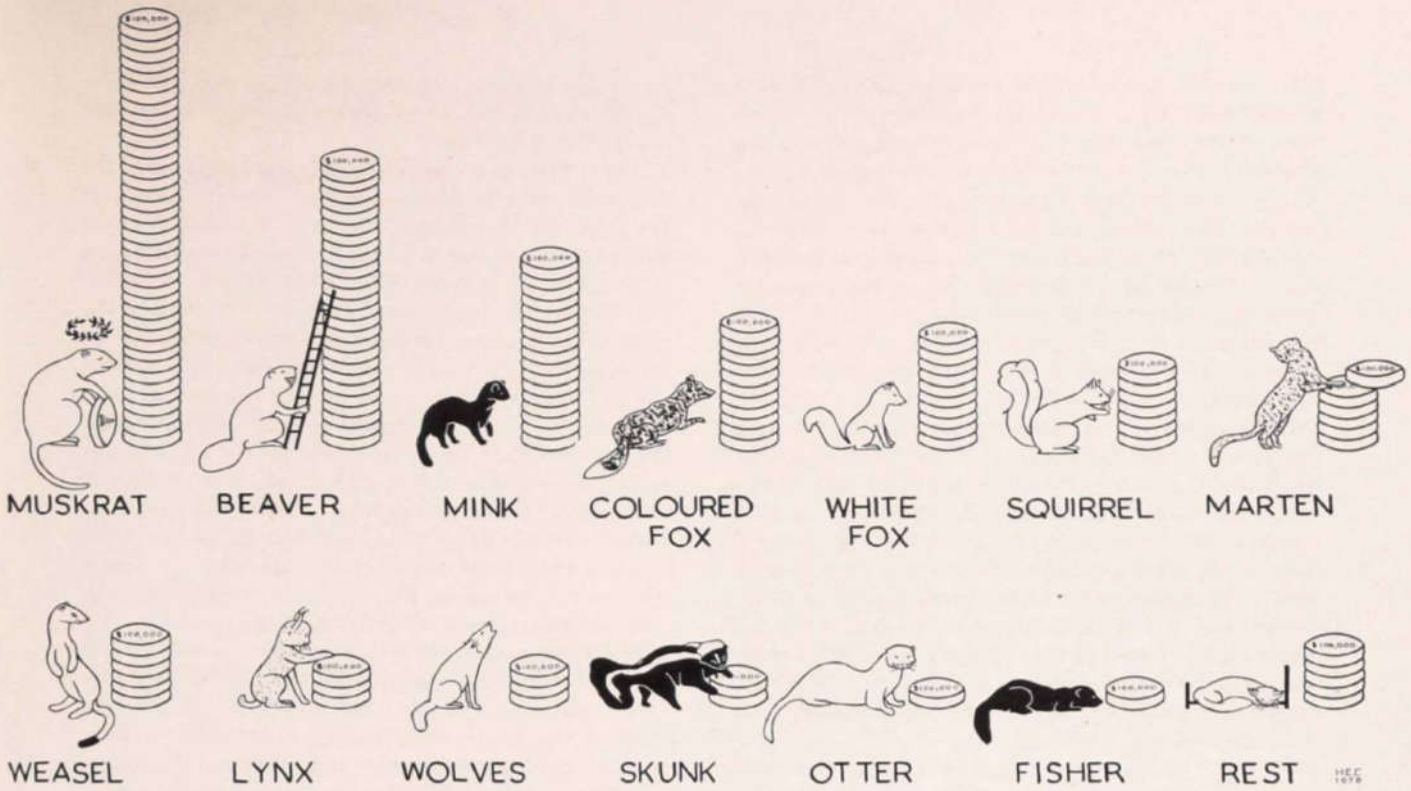


How Canada's wild fur production dollar is split up among the various provinces. Total annual production is worth $15,000,000.

The two kinds of cycle—red fox in Saskatchewan and white fox in the eastern Arctic. Red fox reach their peaks about every ten years, Arctic fox about every four. When the red fox moves into the Arctic he assumes the four-year cycle.



The numbers of most fur-bearers increase and decrease in a regular rhythm, and the animals are said to be cyclic. The length of time from one peak to the next determines the length of the cycle. Canadian fur bearers show two types of cycle—the ten-year, and the four-year. The ten-year is characteristic of the bush country and is exhibited by coloured fox, fisher, lynx, marten, mink, muskrat, wolf and coyote. The four-year cycle occurs amongst animals of the tundra and is shown in the white fox returns. When the red fox moves northward into the tundra its cycle changes from the ten-year one to the four-year one. The peaks of the cycle for most furs, other than mink and muskrat, occur at approximately the same time all across the country. Mink and muskrat peaks usually occur a few years after the peak for other types. An example of each type of cycle is illustrated here. The ten-year cycle is shown in the case of red fox in Saskatchewan. The peaks occur in 1925, 1935 and 1944 or approximately every ten years. The returns for this animal, as well as showing a cycle, exhibit an increasing trend, each peak being higher than the preceding peaks. The example of a four-year cycle is the white fox catch in the eastern Arctic. This shows peaks in 1922, '27, '31, '35, '38, '42 and '46—peaks which are four years apart four times, five years once, and three years once.



Values of annual production of wild pelts in Canada, contributed by each animal. Each coin represents $100,000.

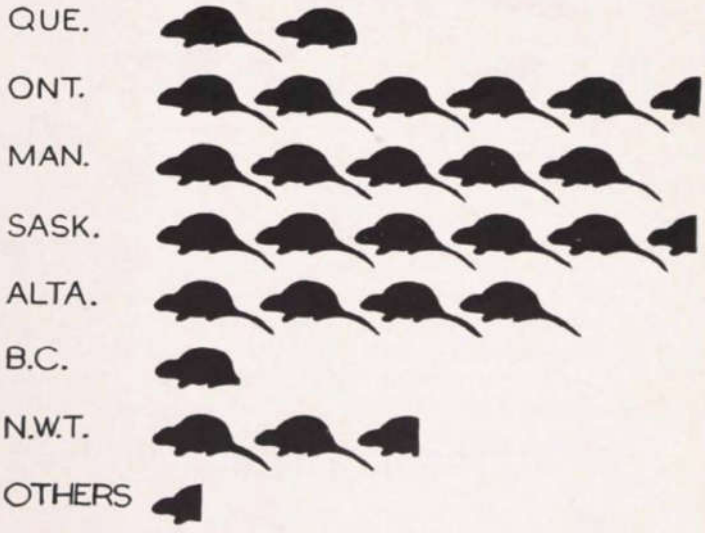
Since it is impossible to account for the whims of fashion we shall not discuss the fluctuations in prices, but will content ourselves with using the average price over the last twenty-nine years. This puts the animals in the following order of decreasing value: fisher, lynx, marten, white fox, beaver, otter, silver fox, cross fox, mink, wolverine, red fox, wolf, coyote, badger, raccoon, skunk, muskrat, weasel, squirrel and rabbit.

Utilizing these average values along with the average number of each type of pelt we find that Canada's annual $15,000,000 fur crop from the wild can be split by provinces as in the accompanying illustration. Ontario is the largest producer accounting for almost a quarter of the crop, while Saskatchewan is the smallest producer of the major provinces.

The same values may be used to find which animal contributes the most to this valuable crop. This is shown in the third illustration where the animals are arranged in order of importance and the height of each pile of $100,000 coins represents the adjacent animal's contribution. From this it will be seen that a cheap pelt such as squirrel (25c) because of its great quantity contributes more value to the collection than does an expensive pelt such as fisher ($47). By far the most valuable animal in Canada's fur economy is the muskrat. This crop is worth four million dollars, or about 27% of the total value of wild caught fur. Next in value come beaver, mink and the foxes, by which time we have accounted for almost eleven of the fifteen million dollars. One and a half million of the remainder is accounted for by the two cheap furs, squirrel and weasel, while the high priced marten, fisher and lynx together amount to little over one million dollars.

1. *Muskrat:* The production of muskrat pelts in Canada ranges from two to four million a year, which is very small compared with the eleven million produced in the United States. In fact the state of Louisiana alone produces six million a year. The Canadian crop is divided among the provinces in the manner shown in the pictogram where each symbol stands for 100,000 pelts. The provinces of Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan produce most of

Muskrat—the most valuable single wild crop—as it is apportioned among the provinces. Each symbol represents 100,000 pelts.



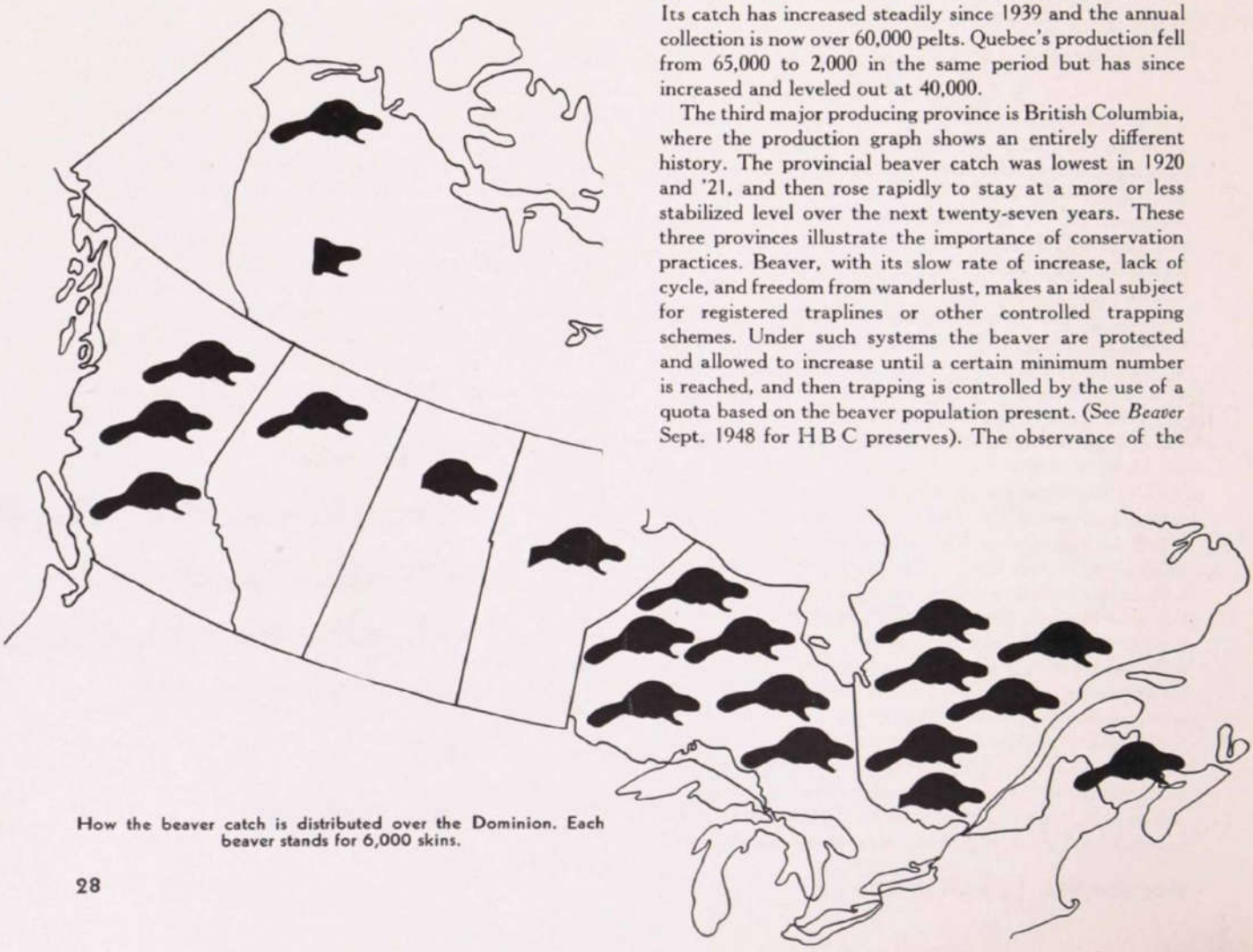
the muskrats. In the prairie provinces the pelts come mostly from delta areas and the flood plains of sediment-laden rivers, especially the Saskatchewan River along whose banks are located the muskrat conservation schemes of the Manitoba and Saskatchewan governments, the Hudson's Bay Company, and Tom Lamb. These conservation schemes are already boosting production, and it is conceivable that as more knowledge of muskrat farming is accumulated they may have raised the production of these two provinces from the low of 400,000 pelts in 1936 to over two and a half million. At present the production has risen to one and a half million.

Ontario does not possess a concentrated marsh area similar to the half million acres near The Pas in Manitoba but draws its crop from smaller scattered marshes. Such a variety of habitats has allowed Ontario to have a large annual production without the violent fluctuations which occur in the other provinces. The ten-year cycle is easily seen in the returns of the prairie provinces, but is not so evident in the case of Ontario. One wonders what will happen to the normal cycle in areas whose habitat is modified by conservation schemes. In Ontario some of the marshes along Lake St. Clair are managed as joint muskrat and wildfowl areas and produce a high yield of pelts, while the Kawartha Lakes region is noted for the high quality Rice Lake Rat.

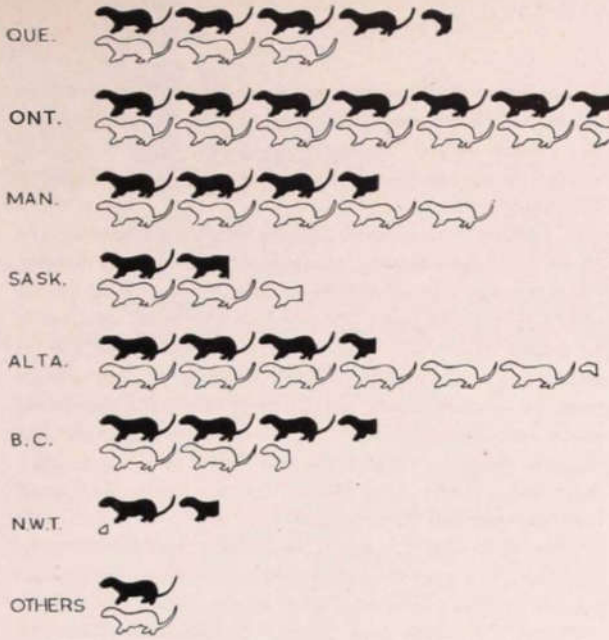
Other important muskrat-producing areas are the Athabasca delta in Alberta and the Mackenzie delta in the Northwest Territories. The latter is unique in being the only large section of Canada where the muskrats are taken by shooting with a .22 rifle instead of by trapping.

2. *Beaver.* The second most important fur animal is the beaver. The number of beaver pelts taken in each province is shown in the accompanying map where each symbol stands for 6,000 pelts. It will be seen that Ontario and Quebec are the two main beaver-producing provinces. Both of them have a vast expanse of the Canadian (Laurentian) Shield which with its aspen thickets and abundant waterways is ideal beaver country. The densest concentration of beaver in the past has been along the shore of Lake Superior where harvests as high as four pelts to the square mile have been taken. The production graphs for both these provinces are U-shaped; the high pelt figure for 1920-22 falling off rapidly to extremely low numbers in the 1930's and then gradually building up again in the 1940's. Ontario's production fell from over 100,000 pelts a year to almost zero, an annual loss of two million dollars. Its catch has increased steadily since 1939 and the annual collection is now over 60,000 pelts. Quebec's production fell from 65,000 to 2,000 in the same period but has since increased and leveled out at 40,000.

The third major producing province is British Columbia, where the production graph shows an entirely different history. The provincial beaver catch was lowest in 1920 and '21, and then rose rapidly to stay at a more or less stabilized level over the next twenty-seven years. These three provinces illustrate the importance of conservation practices. Beaver, with its slow rate of increase, lack of cycle, and freedom from wanderlust, makes an ideal subject for registered traplines or other controlled trapping schemes. Under such systems the beaver are protected and allowed to increase until a certain minimum number is reached, and then trapping is controlled by the use of a quota based on the beaver population present. (See *Beaver* Sept. 1948 for H B C preserves). The observance of the



How the beaver catch is distributed over the Dominion. Each beaver stands for 6,000 skins.



Wild (black) and ranch (white) mink production together constitute the most valuable single fur crop in Canada. Here each animal represents 5,000 pelts.

quota prevents the depletion of the breeding stock. B.C. was the Canadian pioneer of the registered trap-line and only recently have other provinces followed her lead.

Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have not the vast areas of suitable beaver country found in the three aforementioned provinces. Their production has been a series of waves made up of one or two good years followed by a rapid decline in numbers, and then several years of closed season to allow the breeding stock to build up again. There is some indication that realization of the importance of this crop along with modified registered trapline system is leading to a more stabilized production in these provinces.

The N.W.T. returns have been more uniform. They gradually rose from a low in 1930 to a peak in 1942 and then slowly declined. There is some indication that they are now on the rise again.

3. *Mink*, which are trapped in the wild, form the third most important fur crop, but if we include the ranch production, mink becomes the leading fur animal of Canada. The choicest silky pelts are found in the Labrador and Northern Quebec, the pelts from the Mackenzie and Yukon being larger and coarser.

The accompanying chart shows where both the ranched and the wild mink are produced. It will be seen that Ontario is the leading producer in both categories. Its annual production from the wild of over 50,000 pelts is more than twice that of any other province. Quebec is next while Saskatchewan and N.W.T. are last in production from the wild. The ranch figures are based on a ten-year average. Since the production of these does depend on pelt price, availability of food and many other factors, it is quite conceivable that the picture may be changed in the near future. Indeed Alberta is fast becoming the leading producer of ranched mink as the latest returns give this province a 40,000 pelt lead on Ontario. At the same time Saskatchewan has forged ahead of Quebec. The ranch production is not cyclic but that from the wild is. It shows a definite ten year cycle with peaks in 1924, '34 and '42.

4. *Coloured fox* has three different colour phases—the black or silver, cross, and red. The black phase has a jet black pelt with a white tail tip and a white line down the centre of the belly. There are often a few hairs scattered over the body which have white bars on them. In the silver phase these white-barred hairs become more numerous and give the pelt a silvery appearance. As the bar becomes wider or more of the hair becomes white the silver becomes lighter in colour. In platinum foxes the whole hair is white but so far this mutation has not been reported from the wild. The red fox has yellowish red hairs in the place of the black hairs of the silver phase and has a white brush (tail tip) and white belly. The cross fox has a mixture of the red and the silvery-black hairs. Usually there is a black line down the centre of the back and another line across the shoulders. These two lines form a cross from whence this phase gets its name. All phases have an exceptionally bushy tail more than half the length of the body. They curl this around them when they sleep to prevent their sensitive nose and mouth from freezing.

Foxes of the three colours inter-breed and a single litter may contain all three colour phases. The proportion of silvers to cross and reds is governed by genetic laws and is not the same in all parts of the country. In general the proportion of the silver and cross phases increases as one moves northward. It is also higher in the east and west than it is in the prairie provinces. The highest percentage of silver is obtained in B.C.

As shown in the accompanying map the provinces of Ontario and Quebec are the largest producers of fox pelts with a good proportion of this fur coming from the southern parts. B.C. produces the least. Its mountainous wooded country does not provide good habitat for foxes. The cycle is illustrated in the graph for Saskatchewan. The other provinces have a similar cycle except that the peaks do not occur the same years. Usually the peaks are one year later in B.C., Ontario and Quebec than they are in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. All provinces show the increasing trend evident in Saskatchewan and in most provinces the 1944 peak is twice as high as the 1925 one.

5. *White Fox* is the fifth most important fur. The white or Arctic fox which is about two-thirds the size of the coloured fox exists in two colour phases, the white and the blue. The white phase predominates in Canada. The fur of this fox is very dense and almost woolly underneath. The white phase has a snow-white winter pelt made up of long white guard hairs and short smoky-grey underfur. The dark eyes and black nose stand out clearly against this background. The blue phase varies in colour from a smoky greyish-brown through the various shades of brown

and grey. Many of the more desirable types have white hairs scattered over the body, giving them a silvery appearance. They have no white tip to their tail. The summer coat of both phases is a smoky brown colour with no long guard hairs. The autumn change in colour begins in September and lasts until December.

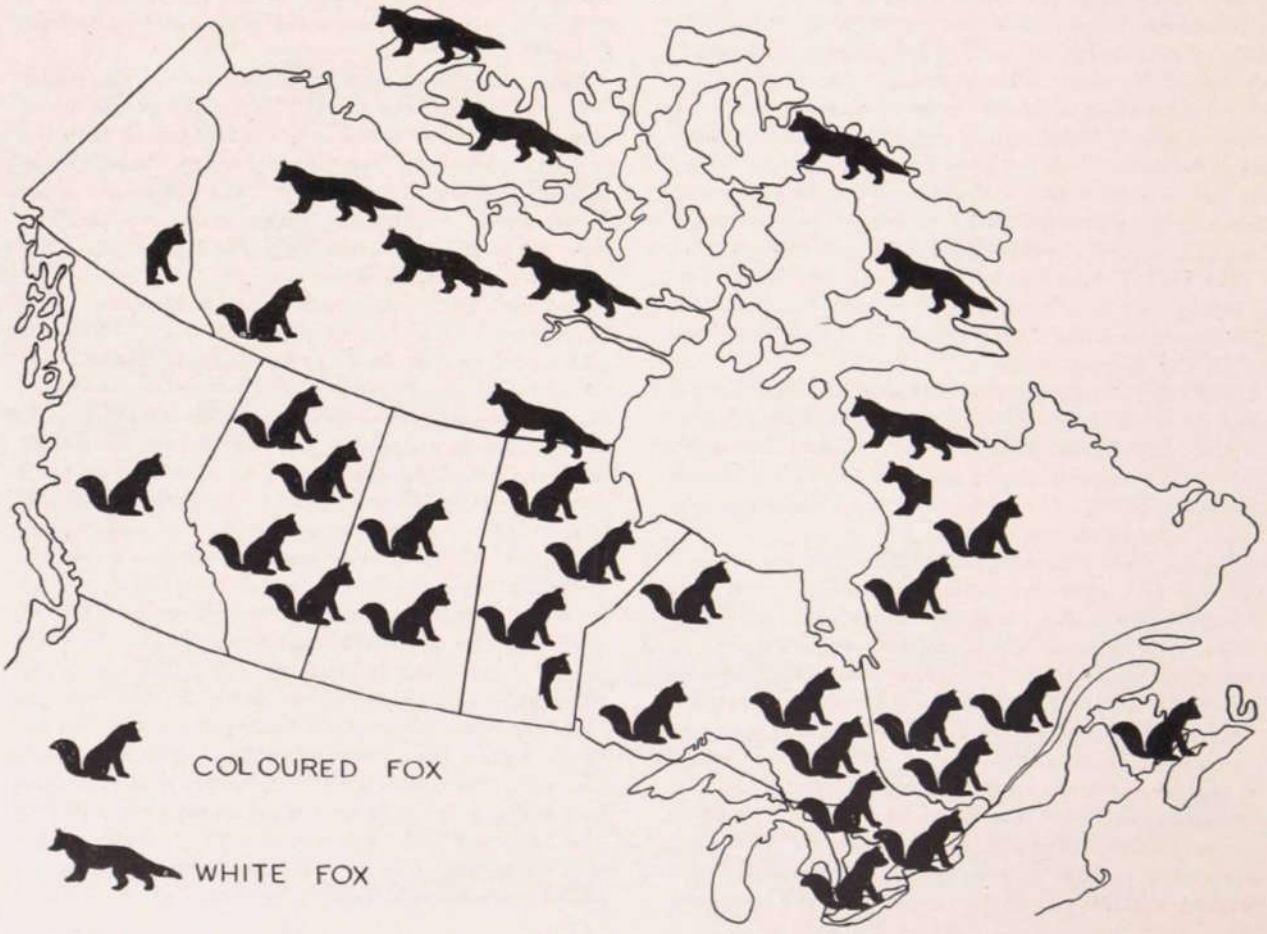
The pelt production is characterized by the violent fluctuations shown on the graph. The Canadian catch goes from a low of 20,000 pelts one year to a high of 70,000 pelts the next. As shown on the map the production is confined to N.W.T. and the province of Quebec. The fluctuations are hard on the Eskimo economy, sending him from abundance to near starvation in the space of one year. The effect of the northward push of red fox on this production has still to be appreciated. The red fox eats three times as much food and also preys on the white, so it may become an important factor in the Arctic economy.

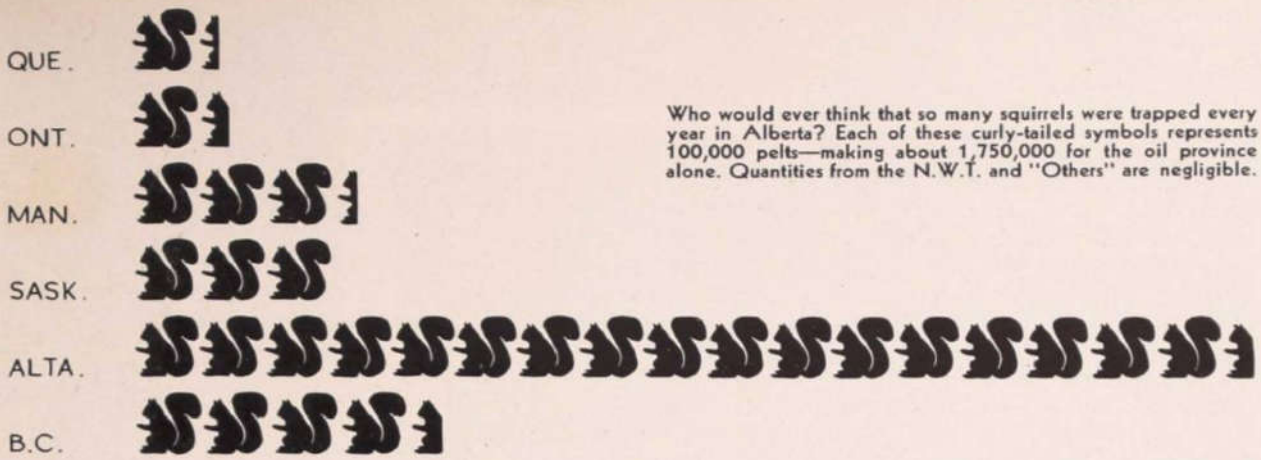
6. *Red Squirrel.* The accompanying diagram shows that Alberta is the outstanding producer, more squirrel pelts being collected in this province than in all the rest. Little attention was paid to this fur in Canada until 1927, but since that time the production has risen rapidly. In Alberta it rose from 50,000 to five million pelts in 1942 and then fell to a little over a million a year. The other provinces have more erratic returns, the peak collections being 810,000 in Saskatchewan, 640,000 in B.C. and 460,000 in Manitoba.

7. *Marten.* This animal with its rich brown coat weighs around six pounds and measures three feet in length. Examination of the chart shows that B.C. with its extensive coniferous forests is the leading producer, accounting for almost 50% of Canada's collection. Quebec and N.W.T. are next. For the period 1920-29 all three provinces have equal production but B.C. has been able to maintain its collection while the catch in the other provinces has slipped. Ontario's 1922 collection was 9,000 but marten decreased rapidly and recent catches have fluctuated between one and two thousand. A study of old records reveals that the Canadian collection has been badly depleted; the present catch being less than one tenth what it was from 1850 to 1880. With the drastic decrease in numbers the cycle has largely disappeared from the Canadian records.

8. *Weasel or Ermine.* The weasel's coat colour is brown in summer and white in winter, and in both seasons it has

Foxes are distributed widely across Canada. Coloured foxes include black or silver, cross, and red. Each silhouette here stands (or sits) for 5,000 pelts.





Who would ever think that so many squirrels were trapped every year in Alberta? Each of these curly-tailed symbols represents 100,000 pelts—making about 1,750,000 for the oil province alone. Quantities from the N.W.T. and "Others" are negligible.

a conspicuous black tip to its tail. The two provinces with the largest production are Alberta and Saskatchewan. The catch in both provinces has risen steadily since 1920, Alberta reaching a peak collection of 526,000 pelts in 1942. The catch in the rest of the provinces is small in comparison with the first two.

9. *Lynx*. The present annual collection of lynx skins is only one tenth what it was in the first decade of this century. The cycle for this animal is more pronounced than for any other species, and for this reason it is often quoted as a classic example. The reason given for its cyclic fluctuations is that the increase depends on the snowshoe rabbit on which it preys, and that the snowshoe rabbit is cyclic. It is true that they are both cyclic, but whether one cycle depends upon the other is problematical. The leading producers are B.C., Alberta, N.W.T., and Quebec. There are three peaks in the period under discussion, each smaller than the preceding one. In the 1925 peak Alberta and B.C. tied for first place with Quebec next and N.W.T. fourth. In the 1935 peak N.W.T. was top and Alberta fourth, while in the 1945 peak B.C. and Quebec were tops and N.W.T. next. Ontario is fifth and Manitoba and Saskatchewan last.

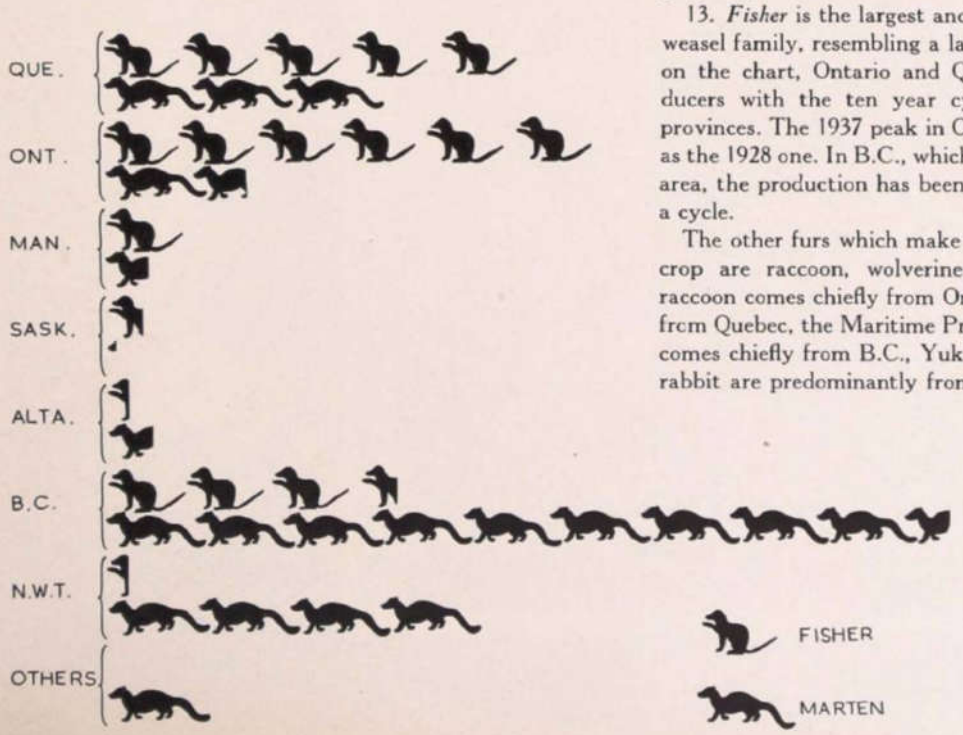
10. *Wolf and Coyote*. The population figures for these members of the dog family are cyclic, but because they are hard to trap and of low pelt value the catch often bears no resemblance to the current population. Bounties are often used to encourage more trapping of these animals. The collection in a peak year amounts to 100,000 coyotes and 20,000 timber wolves. Alberta and Saskatchewan are the largest producers of coyote, while the timber wolf catch is distributed fairly evenly among the provinces.

11. *Skunk*. A quarter million skunk pelts are taken in a good year, but if the price is low in proportion to other furs the trapped animal is discarded and not skinned. Almost half the skunks taken in Canada come from the province of Ontario, with Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta and Quebec following in that order. Very few skunk are trapped in B.C. or N.W.T.

12. *Otter* come chiefly from Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba, with the rest of the provinces each producing less than 1000 pelts a year. The collection of this fur is not cyclic. It has shown a decreasing trend since the nineteenth century with the present catch being less than half the preceding ones.

13. *Fisher* is the largest and handsomest member of the weasel family, resembling a large black marten. As shown on the chart, Ontario and Quebec are the leading producers with the ten year cycle evident in both these provinces. The 1937 peak in Ontario was only half as high as the 1928 one. In B.C., which is the third main producing area, the production has been steady with no evidence of a cycle.

The other furs which make up the rest of Canada's fur crop are raccoon, wolverine, badger and rabbit. The raccoon comes chiefly from Ontario with smaller numbers from Quebec, the Maritime Provinces and B.C. Wolverine comes chiefly from B.C., Yukon and N.W.T. Badger and rabbit are predominantly from the prairie provinces.



The fisher has the most valuable pelt, but he occupies a very low position when it comes to total production. The smaller marten is worth less per pelt but more in total value. Here the fisher symbolizes 200 skins and the marten 1000

On the trail at sun-up.

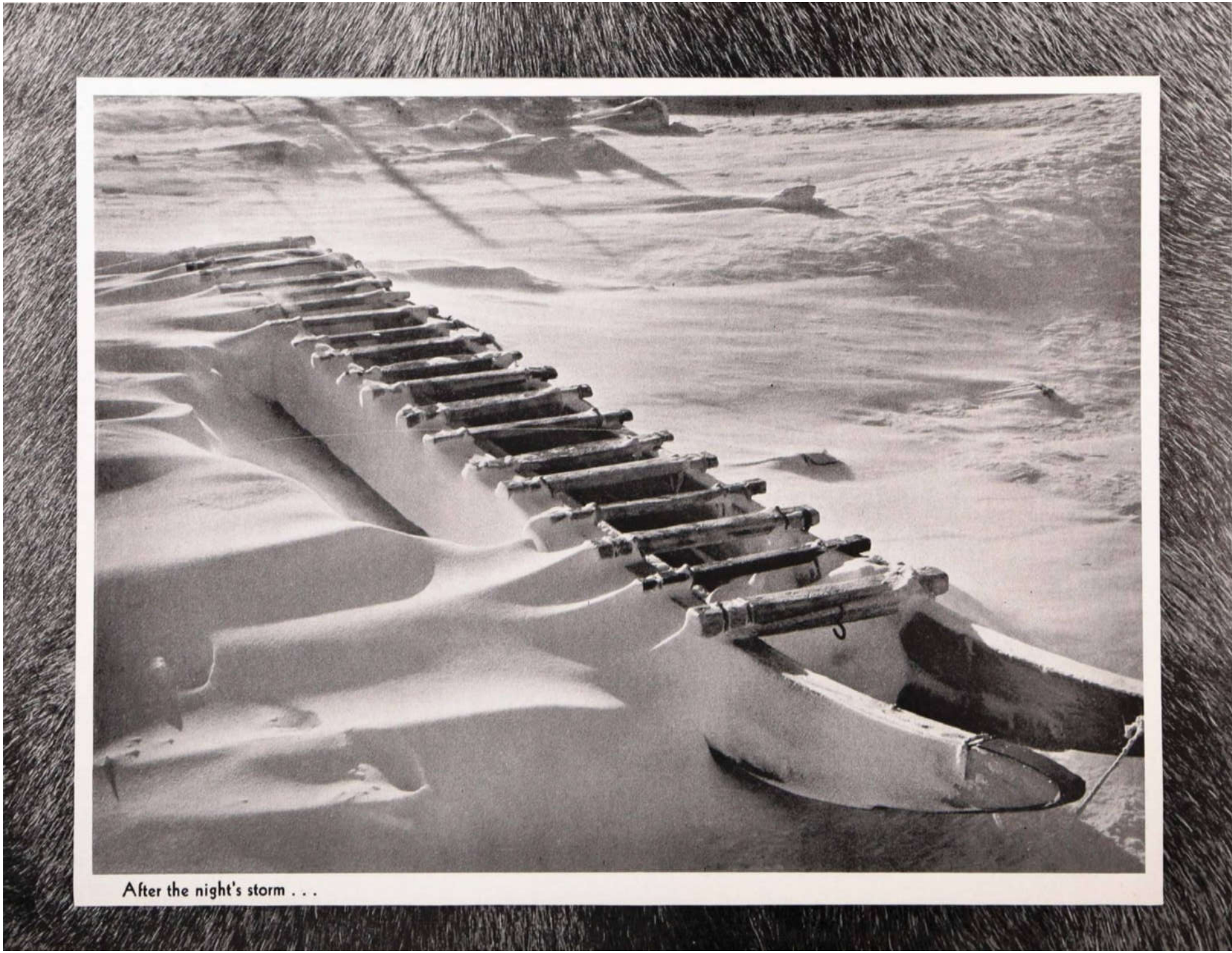
Dog Sled Journey

by Richard Harrington

Noon-day pause.

In an Eskimo tent at night, Cst. Connick, R.C.M.P., tends a caribou-fat lamp.

His hostess and her son do the honours.



After the night's storm . . .

. . . the team hits the trail again.

Welcome sight for travellers—the Hudson's Bay post.

Wealth of the Arctic. White and coloured fox skins hung out to dry.

Netherby Hall, Cumberland, England, from where Graham set out on his Canadian adventure. From a photo presented to the author by Sir Fergus Graham.

WESTWARD WITH SIR GEORGE

Frederick Graham has left us a lively account of a trip to the West in 1847, which is covered by no other known record.

by Grace Lee Nute

USUALLY Sir George Simpson was an indefatigable record keeper on his incredible canoe journeys across the American continent, but in 1847 he made a trip of which there is no diary and few other official records in the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company. For that reason, if for no other, the diary of a young man who accompanied him a part of the way on that trip has great significance. In addition, it is fresh and chatty, so much so, indeed, that a reader finds it hard to believe that its quips and slang were written over a century ago.

From Canobie Lea, where long ago occurred the "racing and chasing" consequent on young Lochinvar's bride-stealing episode; from the Esk River, "where ford there was none"; from ancient, pollarded beechtrees, beneath which little black rabbits roamed, no doubt, as contentedly then as now; and from the ancestral home itself, Netherby Hall, now empty but still impressive—from all this, Frederick Ulrich Graham came in the spring of 1847 to traverse myriads of lakes and dash down the rapids of scores of rivers on his way to Fort Edmonton on the upper Saskatchewan River.

Though Sir George seems to have been on the same "crowded steamer" with Graham, the latter's diary makes no mention of him, merely admitting that the writer was "*perdu*" throughout the crossing because of being buffeted by a nor'wester in a vessel "filled up with a mixture of disagreeable sights, sounds, and smells." After the landing in Boston early in May, "*le gouverneur*" wrote the following to Chief Trader John Ballenden at Sault Ste. Marie: "This will be handed to you by Mr. C. T. P[eter]. McKenzie who, accompanied by Messrs. Graham and Corbet proceed direct with all expedition to the Sault in hopes of reaching that place previous to the passing of the canoes for the North. Should those Gentlemen be successful in that object, you will make the necessary arrangements for their comfortable accommodation in the canoes as far as Fort William where they are to remain until I join them."

Graham was the eldest son of Sir James Robert George Graham, second baronet of Netherby and a man of much achievement and standing in England, having been first lord of the admiralty from 1830 to 1834, home secretary from 1841 to 1846, and lord rector of Glasgow University. Young Graham's companion was Vincent Rowland Corbet, the future third baronet of Moreton, Corbet, Salop. In 1861 Frederick Graham became the third baronet of Netherby.

A tedious railroad journey to Buffalo constituted Graham's introduction to "Yankeeland" and its amazing (to the young Englishman) residents. Then came a trip on an "abominable" lake boat to Mackinac, where the two young men arrived on May 13. This historic hamlet, where three Great Lakes meet, was then "a pretty village situated on an island, with a fort on a hill above the town." Still on the steamer, Graham and Corbet proceeded to Sault Ste. Marie, where they watched the Chippewa Indians catching whitefish in the rapids, went snipe hunting, and "exhausted the supply." For amusement thereafter, Graham visted many native lodges and made "the acquaintance of a very pretty young lady, the daughter of the lady of the lodge, in whose agreeable society I spent a good deal of my time during the following week, learning Chippewa, and other little Indian accomplishments."

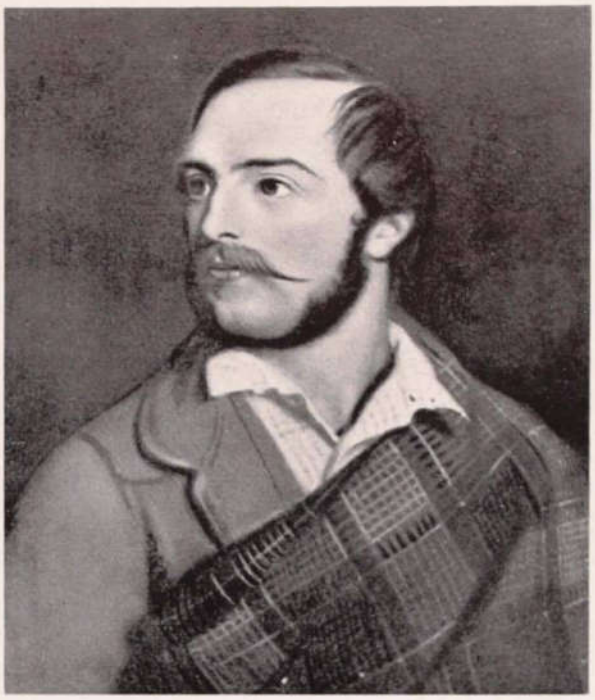
But all this leisureliness vanished with the rather unexpected appearance of the overseas governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. From the moment the strenuous Sir George arrived, all was changed. Off went the canoes up along the rockbound northern arc of Lake Superior. "*Lève*! *lève*!" at three nearly every morning woke tired voyageurs and sleepy passengers alike, for they wanted to keep ahead of Sir George, who had delayed his start from the Sault. Although there were "large masses of solid ice, along the rocky shore," Graham "had a good bathe" in the morning, but he found it "very cold at my toilet, with a rock for my dressing-table, . . . and the forest for a window curtain."

Despite all the voyageurs could do, Simpson overtook them beyond Michipicoten and "went ahead in the light canoe." At the Company's post at the Pic one of the governor's men "got so 'boozy' that he would not start in the morning," and "Sir George [was] in a great state of mind." However, the journey continued and as the little flotilla neared Fort William "the crews of the three canoes . . . being very musically inclined," sang "*Belle Rose* and *La Noisette* in chorus, the whole way" and "camped outside the stockade at one in the morning."

Now the agony of portaging began. Around more than thirty obstructions to navigation in streams and rivers between the mouth of the Kaministiquia River and Rainy Lake the voyageurs made their weary way. Again and again the young English gentleman sympathized with his crew, who looked "like fiends" in the oppressive heat, "their shirts off, their skins like heated copper, and their long black hair all loose, with their wild black eyes glowing like hot coals."

When the fierce heat of the day had departed, the early June nights seemed "terribly cold" to Graham, who watched "the Gouverneur getting anxious as to our provisions holding out." Then came a snowstorm near Lac des Mille Lacs, making camp life miserable but giving "a good effect from the contrast of colours" among the hilly islands, whose variety of timber was then showing the filmy lace of bursting buds.

The track of a large caribou on a portage made Graham long for his rifle, "old Killdeer," at Netherby Hall; but



Frederick Ulrich Graham, who became the third baronet of Netherby.

Corbet did more than wish, for he managed to shoot a brace of "swamp partridges," a brace of "common partridges," and a hare. That evening, June 4, they "shot some rapids . . . and emerged into a fine broad stream, as wide as the Thames at Richmond," the Maligne River, "fringed with the eternal forest, ust now breaking into leaf . . . a lovely calm evening—nothing to be heard but the song of our men, with a running accompaniment of frogs and crickets from the shore."

On the ensuing portage Graham found Sir George and his companion, Major John Griffiths, "wet to the skin, having shipped much water at the last 'chute,' a very great fall, down which we came without taking in a drop; old Batiste [Jean Baptiste Bernard] jumping up in the canoe, selecting his place and darting in without hestitation among the rocks and breakers, through which we shot with the speed of lightning for a couple of hundred yards, the old fellow as cool all the time as if eating his dinner."

That Sir George was not an impeccable cicerone despite his many trips through this region may be deduced from Graham's terse entry that evening: "Sir George assured us it was only a short ten minutes to the camping-ground; it proved to be an hour and a half." Perhaps the governor had forgotten the details of the way; or perhaps he detected a lowness of spirits among his companions and thought the prospect of a nearby camp would bolster their morale.

Next day but one the brigade reached Rainy Lake at its eastern end; then, at eleven o'clock in the morning, the travellers came in sight of Fort Frances, named for Sir George's bride in 1830. After a few hours' hospitable entertainment at the post, all were off again, this time on Rainy

River en route to Lake of the Woods. Graham found the river a fine broad stream, with rich land on either shore, the forest on both banks of hardwood instead of "the eternal pine forests, which we have hitherto passed through." There were ducks in swarms near the river's mouth and Graham longed for a day among them, but contented himself with going to shoot among the sand hills at two o'clock that afternoon, when the canoes had to stop because of "blowing a whole gale with heavy rain" so that the bay could not be crossed. Camp was made on the wooded end of a sand bar in the bay and everything was soon soaked through, for it rained and blew all the evening.

But—there was a feast in Sir George's tent. More morale-building? Rice pudding and cream, and two glasses of wine cheered the diarist, and next morning everyone was allowed to sleep late—six o'clock! As one might guess without any trouble at all, breakfast included—probably consisted of—fish. The next camp site was in a snug little bay, where Graham "took the gun and scrambled along the rocks, [and] missed a mallard most scandalously." The night was warm and camp very cozy.

On the following day there was a "capital breakfast" of cream and whitefish at the Company's fort at Rat Portage, where Kenora is located today. Here the master was "a McKenzie of course," whose first name was Donald and whose nickname was "the major, he having held a lieutenant's commission in the army, during the Peninsula War." Graham, always on the watch for feminine pulchritude, found McKenzie's daughters very pretty. In fact, he "had a long chat with one of them in the dairy; a most unsophisticated little lady, who told me she never saw a white person excepting twice a year when the brigades pass and return."

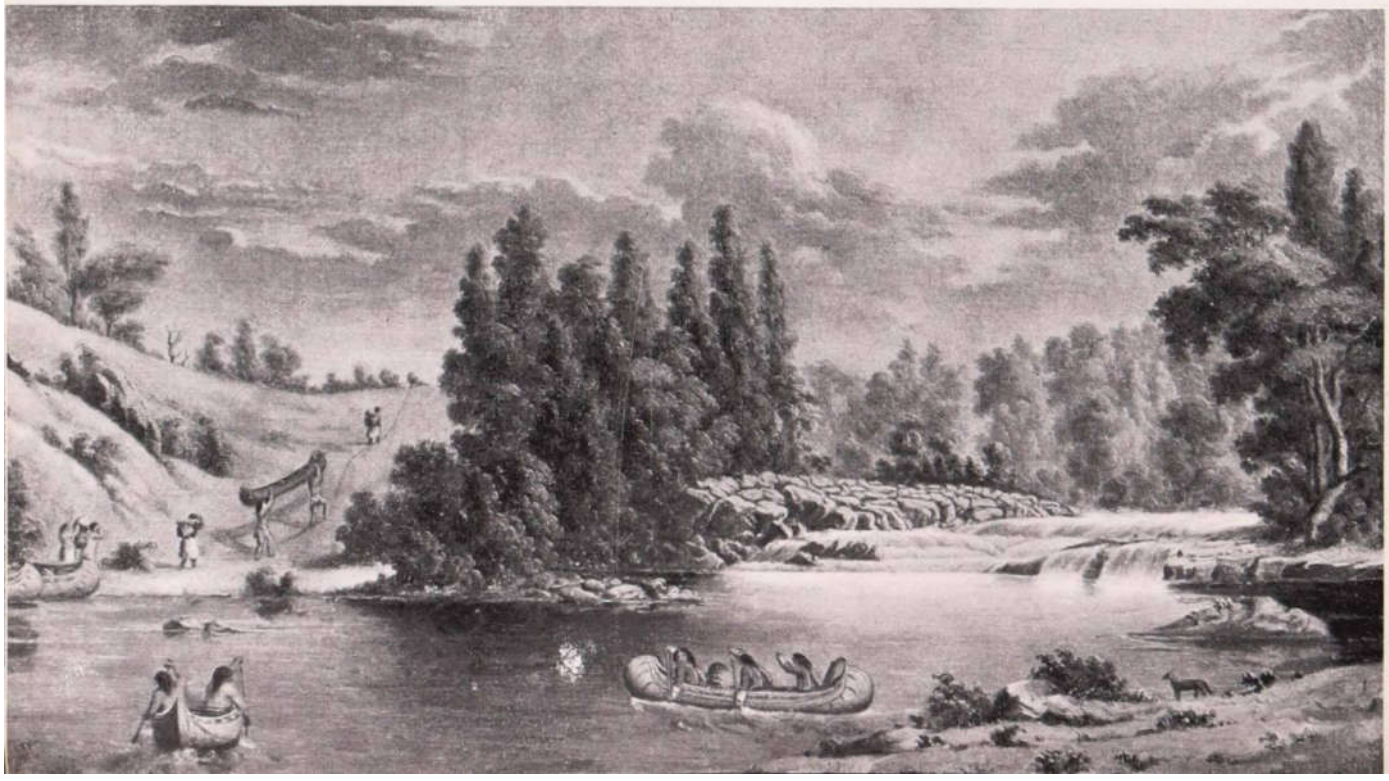
"Trees, trees, trees for everlasting," moaned the young diarist on Winnipeg River. "I shall hate the sight of a wood for the future." But later that day he felt better about them, for he wrote of their pretty camp on a bare rock on the "now splendid river overlooking a magnificent stretch of water," edged with a "hard wood forest, now in full leaf, and the wild forest trees all in bloom."

Even he, young and venturesome, caught his breath next day at the dangers of that river, describing it as one that "would have been very alarming to an elderly gentleman troubled with nerves." Sometimes the canoes would "dash up to the very edge of the chute, and when you thought that over you must go, you were whirled into a little eddy just at the corner," and portaging was in full swing immediately. "In ten minutes you were off again at the other end."

But if the chute was to be run, "Batiste jumped up on the gunwale, chose his place, and at it we went like a horse at a fence. The roar became louder every moment, you see waves, rocks, and foam all round you for a few seconds, while you whirl through it, it appears a toss up f you are to be swamped or dashed to pieces, and then you find yourself floating quietly at the bottom, and wonder how in the world you got there!" He closes the day's entry with "seventy miles done to-day."

Before turning in, however, he had supper with the others, and watched callers arrive: "Had a visit at supper from seven Indians, whom I found sitting in a row outside the Gouverneur's tent, smoking with all gravity. They were much amused at my walking barefoot over the sharp rocks to camp." Evidently they brought supper with them, for Graham adds: "Lots of sturgeon for supper, bought for two or three plugs of tobacco."

White Mud (Terre Blanche) portage on the Winnipeg River. From a painting by Paul Kane. Natl. Gallery of Canada.



Francois Lucie, celebrated guide. Ostrich feathers crown his hat, and his powder horn and bullet pouch are supported by beaded straps. From the painting by Paul Kane.
Royal Ont. Museum.

Next day Fort Alexander at the mouth of the river was reached. Here one canoe left the others and went on to Norway House direct, "with the Gouverneur's secretary in command." The other two canoes crossed a little stretch of Lake Winnipeg and then paddled up Red River to Lower Fort, where a garrison was stationed in the midst of the Red River Settlements. Officers mess was just being announced and Graham joined "as good a set of fellows as ever I came among." Here Sir George stayed only briefly and went on to Norway House, leaving Graham, who was bound for the upper Saskatchewan.

After a long illness in the colony, Graham departed for Fort Edmonton on July 13 under the guidance of Chief Factor John Edward Harriott of Rocky Mountain House, "Sir George Simpson having kindly arranged that he should come back [from Norway House] to accompany me." The journey across the plains on horseback, with much shooting of antelope and buffalo, is told in Graham's best style, for the young fellow obviously was having the time of his life. Only one excerpt from the diary can be given here: "Suddenly there was a tremendous crash, and the bull [bison] was upon me, a fallen tree was between us, and he could not charge up. Pitched another ball into him, and prepared for a bolt, but he fell dead. A grand day's sport! Killed several more. Saw herds after herds all day, in the most beautiful country that can be imagined. Lakes, woods, and creeks in all directions, and mesasqueton [saskatoon] berries thick as blackberries in England. Camped at night at the end of the lakes. Buffalo herds all round us, and their roaring at a distance sounded like the thunder of a huge waterfall."

On the way to Fort Edmonton, Graham visited Fort Ellice, Carlton House, and Fort Pitt, and finally he "arrived on the steep high bluff above the Saskatchewan, and saw Fort Edmondton on the opposite height, with the Union Jack flying at the flag-staff." He was not complimentary to these Company posts, "I hate the sight of these forts. Strange, large tumbledown places, like lumber-rooms on a vast scale. All the white men living in them, look as if they had been buried for a century or two, and dug up again, and had scarcely yet got their eyes open, for they look frightened when they see a stranger."

Not far from Fort Pitt on the return trip Graham killed a grizzly bear, much to his own satisfaction and the respect of the natives. Just how pleased Graham was with his own marksmanship was apparent enough to me nearly ninety years later, when I found the warrior bear's vicious jaws mounted on a wooden pedestal on a bookcase in Netherby Hall. Inscribed on the base were the words, "Lac du Diable, 1847." It was these fierce remains of a summer in the West that inspired me to inquire about a possible diary from the same expedition and thus led to the discovery of a hitherto unknown account of an early Western journey. For "Lac du Diable" told its own story to me, that is, that the animal had been killed near a lake named by voyageurs in an attempted translation of an Indian name. I thought at first that it might be Devil's Lake in northern North Dakota; after reading the diary I found that the warrior bear had been shot on the shores of Manito Lake in Saskatchewan, not far from Battleford.

This is the Dr. Jekyll of the North—playful as a puppy, and gentle with his own kind. J. Manweiler.

WOLVES

by Angus F. MacIver

A veteran trapper relates some of his experiences with "the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde of the North."

NORTH American wolves are by nature afraid of man, and generally will take to their heels at the first sight of him. But there are exceptions. One day my wife and I were travelling by dog team up the Churchill River, when about five miles out of Churchill we noticed a big wolf skulking amongst the rough ice. And it remained in sight for the next fifteen miles. We didn't have a gun with us, and for that we were thankful a few hours later when the incident was over. Otherwise we would have missed the excitement of a lifetime.

The first few times we stopped to rest the dogs, the wolf stopped also. However, as our journey progressed it came closer and closer until at the last few resting places it was within a few feet, in front of and to the side of the team. There the great creature, a light gray, its tail tucked closely under its belly, gambolled as if at play. The performance was quite creditable in spite of its hundred or so pounds, and the vaudeville-like act was continued until darkness fell. All of which goes to prove that even among wolves there are individualists.

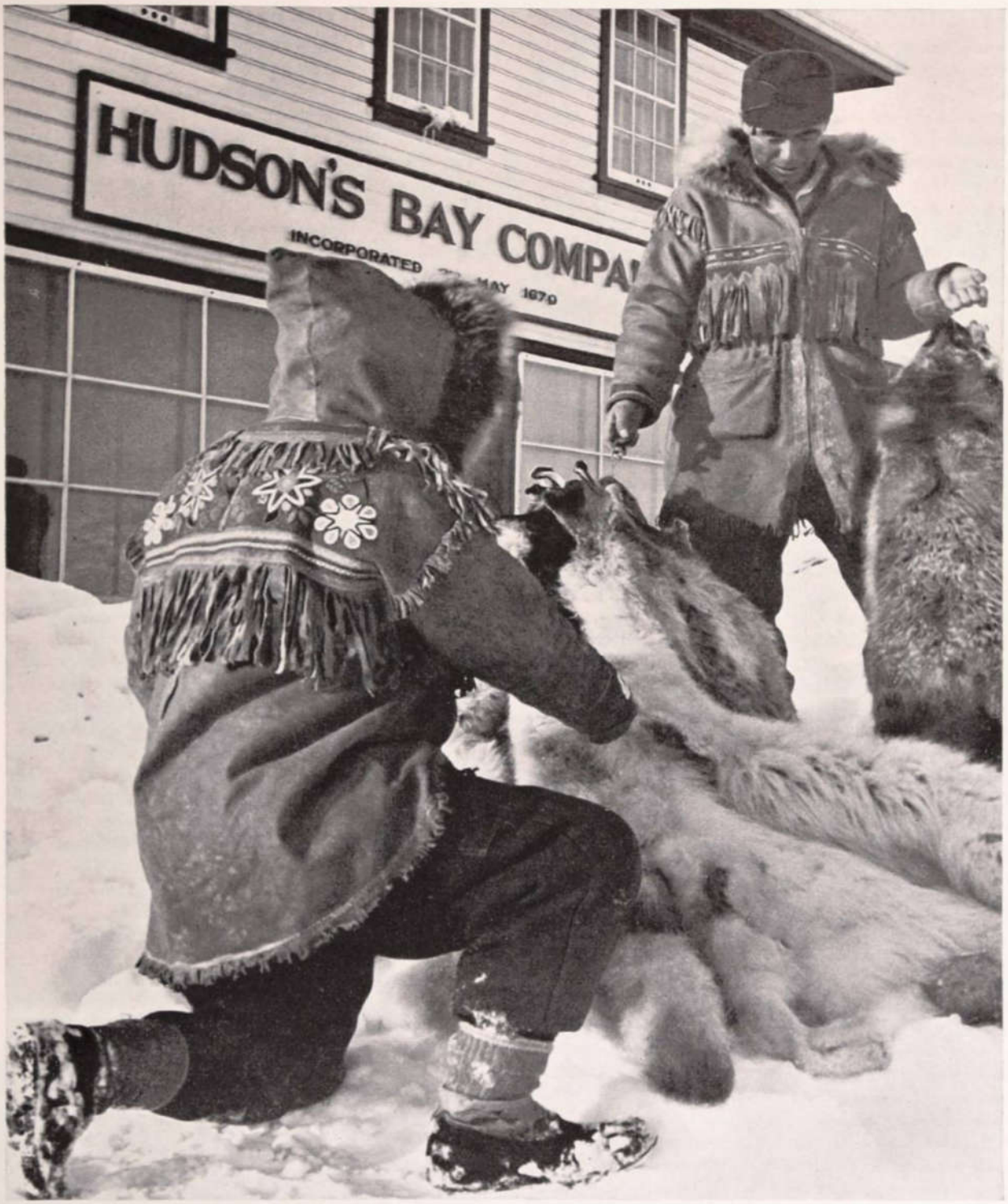
Wolves usually follow a man's track whether made by snowshoes or toboggan, for some distance at least, but by habit they keep well out of sight. And on these secretive trips, generally made by night, what damage they do! During several years wolves got more fur from my traps than I did. True, during those winters deer were scarce and the wolves were in need of food; but they did not stop with taking what they ate. Nor do they confine their robberies to the seasons in which deer are scarce. Other winters I have found fox that had been taken from traps, tossed about as boys do a ball, and then discarded. On still other occasions the take was carried for miles and then buried in the snow.

Many a man fishing through the ice has cursed the timber wolves for destroying fish piled ready for shipment. On Trout Lake, north of Lac la Biche, I received enthusiastic thanks from the men winter-fishing there when I shot two timber wolves that had swept down several times by night and on each occasion had eaten and destroyed at least a hundred dollars worth of fish.

The most serious aspect of the timber wolf's ravages is its destruction of barren-land caribou. Many natives are totally dependent on these animals for both food and clothing, and to a lesser extent so are all people living in the area. During winter months wherever there are caribou there are also timber wolves, harrying and killing. Every season that caribou are plentiful I find many of them wolf-killed and only partly eaten, sometimes nothing but the tongue gone. Indications are that wolves prefer freshly slaughtered meat and never return to a previous kill as long as more caribou can be procured. It has been estimated that during a winter one wolf will kill at least fifty caribou.

Conservationists have made the claim that timber wolves keep the caribou herds strong by killing off the weaklings and also that the continued existence of the caribou proves the wolves are doing no great harm. The fact is that it is not always the weakling that is taken by the wolf. The wolf is a gourmet. It is usually the remains of the fat and healthy that are left lying after an attack. And that the caribou are not extinct makes me believe timber wolves are not indigenous to caribou country. Wolves breed from the time they are one year old and and have litters of from three to eight. Caribou do not breed until three years of age and have a single offspring, rarely twins. On the prairies in what had once been buffalo country, I found timber wolf skulls and buffalo skulls of approximately the same age. It is my belief that when the buffalo herds were no longer existent, the wolves moved north to the land of the barren-ground caribou.

No animal preys on this arch killer. A bear is powerful enough to kill a wolf, but not swift moving enough to catch him. And a wolf has too much sense to attack any animal it cannot subdue. On Wholdaia Lake, northeast



Two trappers bring wolf skins to the post at Churchill, Manitoba. R. Harrington.

of Lake Athabaska, I saw a large gray wolf and a squat brown wolverine pass one another within a hundred yards. Both animals stopped occasionally and looked at each other, but neither offered combat. Finally they were beyond sight; each had continued in the direction it was headed. I do know that wolf and wolverine have fought, as on occasions I have killed a wolverine whose neck plainly bore the marks of wolf fangs. Whether or not the wolves, like the wolverines, lived to see another day I could not tell, nor yet which had been the aggressor.

The only other animal I have personal knowledge of a wolf attacking without complete success was, strange to say, a peace loving beaver. The battle ground was the steep bank of the Allard River in northern Quebec and the time of year, autumn. The beaver, a large one, was engaged in putting up feed when the wolf appeared as if out of nowhere, made a lunge and caught the rodent by the back. In the ensuing struggle the animals rolled down the bank, hit the water with a tremendous splash and went down out of sight. A few seconds later the wolf broke the surface. He *had* to come up for air, as he was not an under water swimmer like the beaver.

Questions are often asked as to whether wolves always travel in packs, and if so, are these family groups? During the most severe weather when the snows lie deepest and the difficulty of hunting is at the peak, wolves band together in varying numbers. I myself have counted twenty-eight in a string crossing Stone Lake, east of Lake Athabaska. Surely it would be safe to assume these were not all of one family! And many times I have counted tracks that showed a much larger pack had recently passed. However an occasional wolf travels alone and hunts the same way, but whether from choice or because of rejection by the group is not evident.

Remarkable cooperation is shown at times by these animals, and a certain amount of strategy as well. Tracks in the snow frequently reveal that several wolves have placed themselves at more or less regular distances around a caribou so that no way of escape was open. An Indian told me of seeing three wolves wear down a caribou by a relay chase around a small lake. Then all took part in the kill.

With the coming of spring less food is required, and the hunting packs break up. This is mating time. Each pair seeks a suitable den for the birth and rearing of the young. During these months of occupation with family duties their food will consist of eggs, birds, mice, rabbits, berries and indeed anything they can get.

A wolf rarely attacks a man, but it has occurred.

Bill Varnisson of Churchill was severely bitten by a wolf yet is living to tell the tale. He was standing in the river, leaning over a canoe, when he felt a nip being taken at his leg. Believing it to be one of his dogs—indeed, he had heard it coming—he swung around in surprise that one of his own team would bite him, and was more surprised to find his assailant a wolf. He grabbed it by the throat and held its head under water until it drowned. A number of deep bites had been inflicted by the wolf during the under water struggle and, because of the great distance from town, Varnisson had to treat them himself. This he did by washing them thoroughly with hot water and pouring in iodine. Time passed and Varnisson at last realized he was suffering from one thing only, the worst case of fright he had ever experienced. All of which again raises the old question, namely, will a wolf attack a man unless it has rabies? Also, is hot water and iodine a cure for infection from a sick wolf?

On several occasions when I have had wolf carcasses in the cabin preparatory to skinning, visitors have happened in. Always their comments are the same, and almost always in the same order: "They're beautiful!", "I never dreamt they were so large!" and "What a build!".

An adult specimen is about three feet high at the shoulders. If a male, the weight is close to a hundred pounds; if a female, about fifteen pounds less. Weight and strength are concentrated in the forepart of the animal; the rear, comparatively light, and the long legs with their dog-like feet, are certainly designed for speed. The head is enormous with long nose and jaws; indeed the gape is almost enough to receive a person's head. The fangs, cruelly pointed and curved like strong, sharp hooks, are an inch in length. In colour the pelt may be any shade from white to black or it may be in mixed tones of gray. The winter coat with its ruff presents an appearance magnificent beyond that of any other of our animals.

Not one of the five hundred or so wolves that I have skinned during thirty years in the North showed a single mark to indicate that they ever fight amongst themselves. One spring I captured three wolf pups and gave them for rearing to a dog that had young of about the same age. Both mother and youngsters accepted each other. The playing, the kissing, the very evident affection of the adopted pups was in sharp contrast to the behaviour of her own. Surely the timber wolf with its destructive treatment of other animals and its kindness towards its own is the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde of the North.

The effect of snare, trap, gun and even poison on the timber wolf has been slight. Manitoban reports show their numbers to be alarmingly on the increase and their slaughter of deer to be unprecedentedly great. What can be done to clear the country of this rapacious animal?

This is the Mr. Hyde of the North—cruel, crafty, and rapacious.
W. Blowey.

HUDSON BAY to the ORIENT

by R. Glover

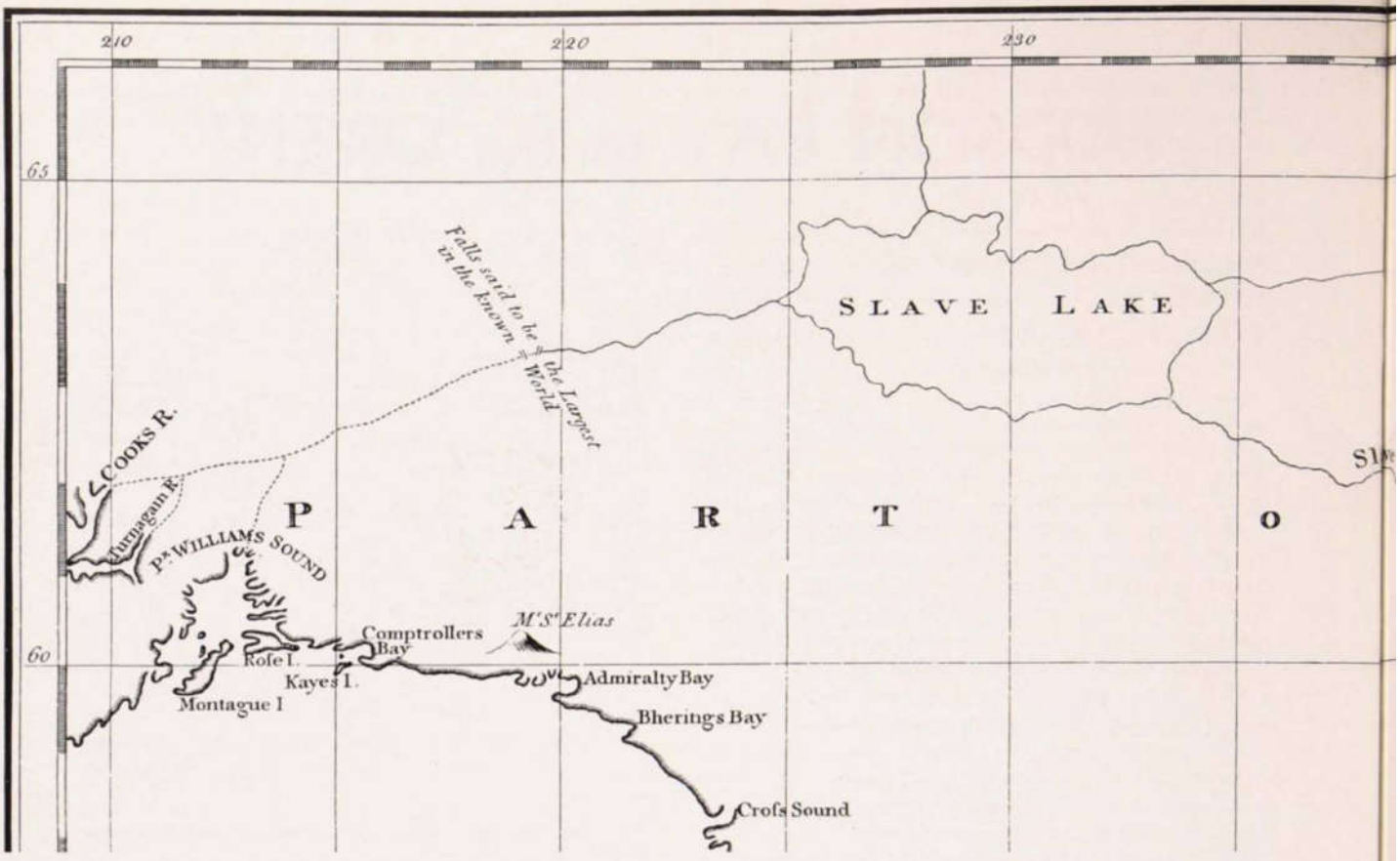
Alexander Dalrymple, 18th Century geographer, devised a plan for promoting the fur trade by uniting the East India and Hudson's Bay Companies.

A STRONG will, a keen mind, and a thrustful spirit are assets that together will carry a man far. Alexander Dalrymple possessed all three, and needed them. The seventh son of a Scottish baronet, he had little to expect from a family patrimony on which six elder brothers had a prior claim, and his parents solved the problem of what to do with the boy by apprenticing him as a clerk to the East India Company. So in 1753, at the mature age of 15, young Alexander was packed off to Madras. From there on it was up to him to make his own way in the world. He made it in an unspectacular manner, not by military glory like Clive, nor shady dealing in diamonds like the forebear of the Pitts, but simply by acquiring a vast knowledge of geography. By the time the Admiralty decided to create a hydrography department in 1795, Dalrymple had made himself the obvious choice as its first chief. Since 1779 he had occupied a similiar position on the staff of the East India Company, and while there he won himself a minor niche in Canadian history. How he did so is our subject here.

His employers, the East India Company, enjoyed the monopoly of Britain's trade to China as well as India. Dalrymple himself had been at Canton and observed that "not only the Climate, but the Habits of China, make *it* the *great mart* for *Furs* of all denominations, and their own Country and Coasts are too well inhabited to afford an asylum to animals, which abound only in wastes and wilds." The masters of the wastes and wilds, where fur-bearers abounded, were those other titular monopolists, the H B C, and much of their fur, particularly beaver, did make its way to China. Unfortunately, in Dalrymple's eyes, the middlemen who passed them on to China were Russian merchants. The best part of the enormous Chinese price on the H B C's beaver thus fell into foreign hands, and, worse still, any interruption of the Russian trade routes across Asia "very much affected the market in England." To Dalrymple it seemed obvious that a union of his own East India Company with the H B C was in the interest of both parties. Hence he wrote in 1789 his *Plan for Promoting the Fur-Trade and Securing It to This Country by Uniting the Operations of the East India and Hudson's Bay Companys.*

Conspicuous as the advantages of such a union might seem on paper, a practical method of exploiting them over the globe was unfortunately less obvious. It was a long voyage indeed from the Bay to Canton by London. So Dalrymple became an advocate of the North West Passage. But his aim was to discover "a NW Passage *through* America," not over the top. He wrote as the first herald of Milton and Cheadle's "North West Passage by Land," not as a reviver of the shattered hopes of Frobisher and Hudson. His proposal is best explained in his own words. "By June," he says, "the early ships are arrived at Canton, or may always be certain of arriving if they chuse; Having delivered their outward cargo, and refreshed their crew, I propose a Coppered-Ship shall sail the 1st July, for the NW Coast of America, to receive the Furs collected there by the Hudson's Bay Company's Agents." The voyage, he calculated, should not take more than two months. On the American coast the vessel should "remain in Harbour 'till after the Equinoctial Gales, and then return to China, where she will arrive in December and be

Alexander Dalrymple, hydrographer to the East India Company and later to the Admiralty. B. C. Archives.



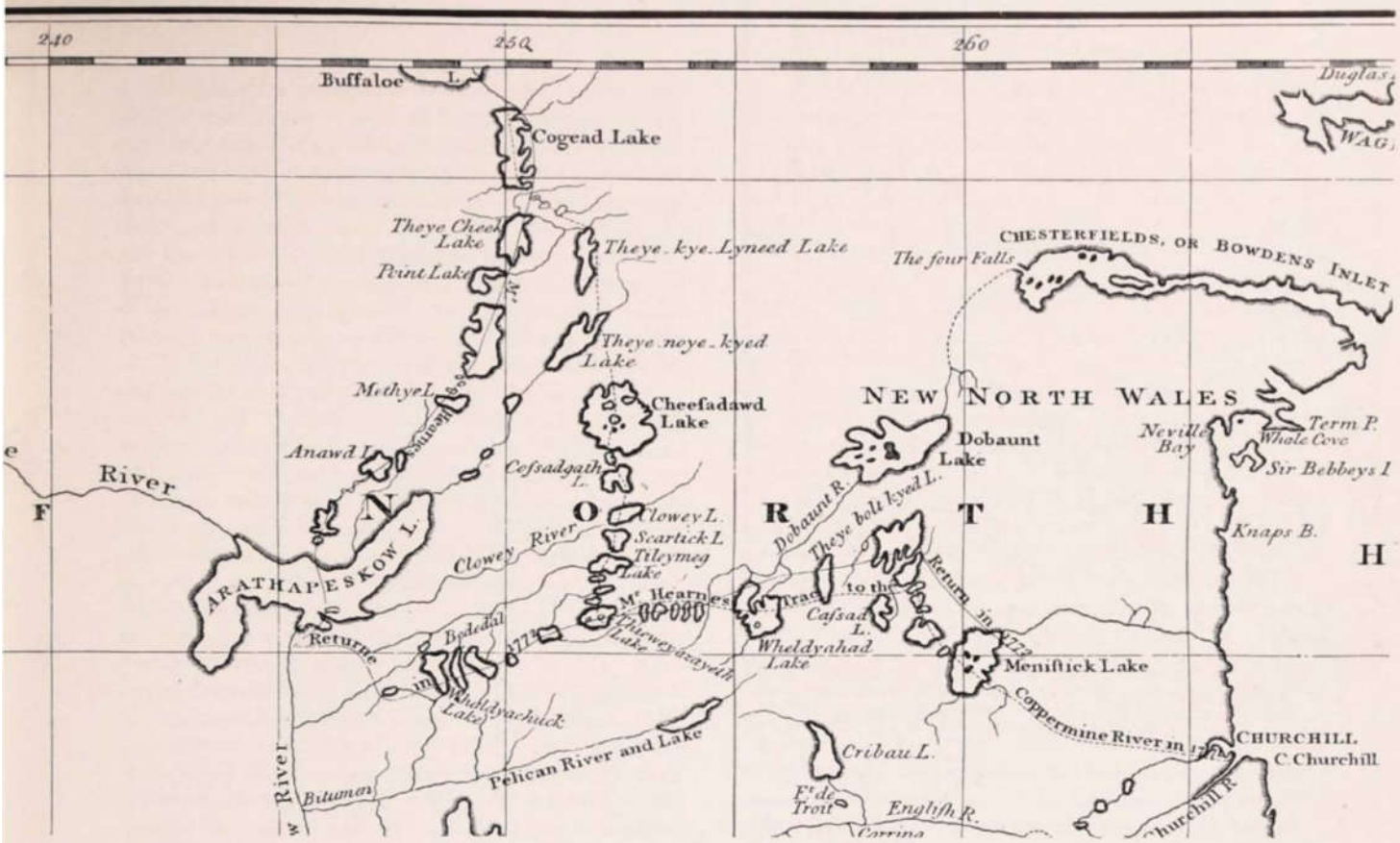
This map from Meares' *Voyages* of 1790 shows how geographers of that time hopefully considered there might be a trade route through British America to the Pacific. It is entitled "A Chart . . . Demonstrating the very great probability of an

ready to come home to England, in January or February." It was necessary, Dalrymple continues, to find on the West coast "that Port, where communication can most conveniently be kept up by Posts or Factories at regular and expedient distances from Hudson's Bay;" and for this it was equally necessary to acquire "a more exact knowledge . . . of the interiour *Lakes* and *Rivers* [of America] than we at present have."

It is hard to see anything visionary or ridiculous in this scheme as Alexander Dalrymple outlines it. Much of it occurred, independently, to another Alexander; but this Alexander (whose surname was, of course, Mackenzie) had the advantage of being himself in America and able to acquire that "more exact knowledge of the interiour *Lakes* and *Rivers*" necessary for the scheme by making explorations on the actual ground. Dalrymple, tied to his desk behind the Ionic facade of the same East India House on Leadenhall St., where Charles Lamb wrote so many delightful letters on his employers' time, and stationery, could only do his exploring on paper. He did it, however, with the utmost thoroughness. He used every log he could secure of sea captains who had reached the American west coast; maps of Canada by French cartographers; two maps of the far North-West made by "the Canadian Traders"—that is, the merchants of the North-West Company; and, best of all, he writes, "my Friend, Mr. Wegg, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, assured me that every information, in the possession of the *Hudson's Bay Company*, would be readily communicated . . . with much satisfaction I found that the *Geographical Materials* in their possession were very copious."

Among the materials the H B C provided were journals and charts of their explorations in the Bay itself, of Samuel Hearne's journeys to the Coppermine and Cumberland House, and those of "Mr. Philip Turnor who was employed, by the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1778 and the following years in making *Surveys*; and determining the Latitude and Longitude of their several Forts and Factories; this he seems to have executed with great credit to himself; and to The Company who employed him." (Thus Dalrymple anticipates the praise J. B. Tyrrell was to bestow on Turnor when he rediscovered him in 1934.) From these materials Dalrymple made a new map and published it (also in 1789) with a commentary entitled *Memoir of a Map of the Lands about the North Pole.*

With careful honesty Dalrymple omitted from his map the feature on which his highest hopes for his scheme were set, namely, a great river leading far into the American continent from the West. He believed one existed. Captain Dixon, who had been on the coast in 1786, expressed to him the considered opinion "that all the *Lands*, yet discovered, on the *West Side*, at least from Nootka inclusively *Northward*, are *Islands*, and *not* the *Continent*"; and further, writes Dalrymple, "Captain Dixon informs me



Inland Navigation from Hudson's Bay to the West Coast." It also shows how Hearne's Arathapeskow Lake—which was really Slave Lake—was confused with Lake Athabasca, since Slave Lake River is shown flowing out of it into Slave Lake.

that from the many *Drifts* &c he is persuaded that there must be a *large River* or some *back-water* . . . This opinion is more strongly confirmed by Captain *Hanna* in the *Sea Otter* in 1786, who entered *Fitzhugh Sound* about 50′ beyond the farthest Land that Captain *Dixon* saw" and wrote in his log for September 11 "I never in the *Mouth* of any *River*, or *Inlet* found such large *quantities of Timber*, and *Rubbish*, as continually came down here with the Stream." Behind the inconclusive, but strongly suggestive evidence of these recent British skippers lay an old claim of the Spaniard, De Fonta, to have found a river up which he sailed eastward into the American continent for eighteen days in boats, passed eight falls and reached a vast lake from which he returned downstream to the sea in eleven days. Backed as De Fonta seemed to be by Dixon and Hanna, Dalrymple put much confidence in him, though he ungrammatically concluded "there is not competent data for describing *De Fonta's track*," and hence made no place on his map.

For mapping the land Dalrymple had much more data than for the sea. Some of it, stretching from James Bay to Lake Superior and from York Fort to near the elbow of the Saskatchewan, was provided by Turnor in whom as noted, Dalrymple had full and justified confidence. The rest, apart from some Indian sketches, came mainly from Hearne and "the Canadian Traders." It covered the far Northern areas of Hearne's journeys in search of the Coppermine and his return by the Great Slave lake, and Peter Pond's route from the Grand Portage to Lake Athabaska, a much greater expanse of territory; but in it Dalrymple, very soundly, placed much less confidence. "Although the Map of the Canadian Traders by itself," he writes, "would tend to *mislead*, by extravagantly extending the limits of their Peregrinations, yet, when corrected by Mr. Turnor's Astronomical Observations, It is of great use: especially in assigning, within some reasonable bounds the Longitude of the *Arathapeskow Lake*." That is the best Dalrymple had to say for Peter Pond and his fellows. As for Hearne, Dr. John Richardson (1836) is responsible for the story "that Dalrymple was induced closely to examine the courses and distances recorded in Hearne's Journal whereby he discovered so great a discrepancy between the outward and homeward journies [to the Coppermine] as caused him to reject the higher latitudes"; and on his story Richardson based a theory that "the animadversions of Dalrymple" caused Hearne tendentiously to omit from his published book the mileages of his daily journeys recorded in his MS journal. Unfortunately Richardson has been taken seriously here. In fact, he shows only the vaguest of hearsay acquaintance with what he is talking about. Hearne tells us we are not to look for more than one pamphlet to find Dalrymple's criticisms of him. That pamphlet is unmistakably the *Memoir of a Map of the Lands about the North Pole*. Its criticisms rest on

Part of another map from Meares showing two latitudes for the Coppermine mouth. Arrowsmith followed Dalrymple in placing it about 68½°N. His map of 1795 gives the longitude as 111°W., not 132° as shown here. It is actually about 115°W. 67¾°N.

nothing so inconclusive as comparative aggregations of Hearne's daily mileages on his far from identical routes out and home, but on the sure and definitive surveys of Philip Turnor, who, with Pond, provided all the information Dalrymple sought, but of whose very existence Richardson seems unaware.

Hearne and Turnor both had mapped the route from York Factory to Cumberland House. Comparison of their maps showed immediately how utterly unreliable Hearne was. He had estimated the longitude of Cumberland as 13½° west from York; by astronomical observation Turnor found it to be only 9½°—one third less; Hearne made the latitude 54°29′, Turnor 53°57′. There was ample reason to distrust a surveyor who could make errors such as these. Dalrymple, therefore, did question the remoter latitudes and longitudes of Hearne's journey to the Coppermine and from his questioning has sprung the remarkable legend, that he was a "fierce critic," who "attacked" Hearne with "less than justice," with "severe strictures," and with "vitriolic criticism" couched in a "venomous tone."

The grounds for this legend are small indeed. Hearne, to be sure, was "rather hurt" by the damage done to the great and flattering reputation as an explorer which he had found awaiting him on his return to England, but, for all that, the *Memoir* contains neither injustice, vitriol nor venom. Its tone throughout is of frank and straightforward courtesy. Though, as we have heard so often, Dalrymple here rejects both Hearne's location of the mouth of the Coppermine in Lat. 72°N and his observation for latitude at Conge-cathe-wha-chaga, he does so, expressly, "with diffidence." Further, he is kind enough to ascribe any fault there might be to "some *incompetency* of the Instrument [used for observing latitude]: for Mr. Hearne does not seem to have been wanting in assiduity and Geography is much indebted to him." In view of the conflict between Hearne's and Turnor's latitudes for Cumberland, this comment cannot be judged ungenerous. Nor did Dalrymple have any ulterior motive in cutting down Hearne's latitude for the Coppermine from 72° to a position astonishingly near where Franklin found it in latitude 67°. He was not, as has been supposed, arguing for a latitude past which ships might sail. His sole interest here seems to be in achieving as nearly as possible that precise accuracy which should be the aim of every geographer.

If, however, Dalrymple had no more than an academic interest in the Coppermine, his attitude to the "Arathapeskow Lake" was very different. This lake appeared on Hearne's MS map of 1772 and as Dalrymple found "the different copies of Hearne's map do not exactly agree," he went to the authentic original—the actual map published in the *Beaver* for June, 1949. Even so he was misled. Nowadays we know that Hearne's lake was in fact the one which Peter Pond had named the Slave Lake and (in his map of 1785) had grossly misrepresented as a body of water with a more or less circular outline. Hearne's Arathapeskow Lake, on the other hand, does offer some rough similarity to the northwestern and eastern arms of the Great Slave Lake as we know them, and, for that very reason, bore no likeness whatever to Pond's Slave Lake. On the contrary, being very long from East to West and rather narrow, it was by no means unlike the sausage-shaped body of water named "Arabasca" on Pond's map. Similarity of name and shape caused Dalrymple to identify Hearne's Arathapeskow Lake with Pond's "Arabasca"—our Athabaska—and, as Pond had made two journeys to the North-West and Hearne but one, he on the whole preferred Pond's outline. The problem of where to locate the lake, he solved by slashing one third off Hearne's estimate of its longitude westward from Churchill, as Philip Turnor had indicated was necessary; and with equal ruthlessness, if not with equal reason, he cut Hearne's latitude by the same proportion. This placed the lake's farthest point in longitude 114°, latitude 61°40′. There it occupied a position of prime importance in his scheme. So great a lake must empty itself into the sea by no small river. Though aware of indications to the contrary, Dalrymple on the whole still thought it probable that his Arathapeskow Lake was the very one De Fonta had reached in his eighteen-day boat trip from the Pacific.

Here then was Dalrymple's North West Passage. Unless some shorter route westward were found through Chesterfield Inlet and across Doobaunt Lake, it would go up the Hayes from York to Lake Winnipeg, on up the Saskatchewan and over the height of land to the "Arathapeskow Lake," down by De Fonta's river and out over the Pacific to the fabled riches of Cathay—or, more prosaically, to Canton's unsavoury water front and the corrupt officialdom of the Manchu Emperor's customs houses. A united company successfully exploiting this route and enjoying the combined monopolies of trade to the Bay and the Orient must be a triumphant success, thought Dalrymple.

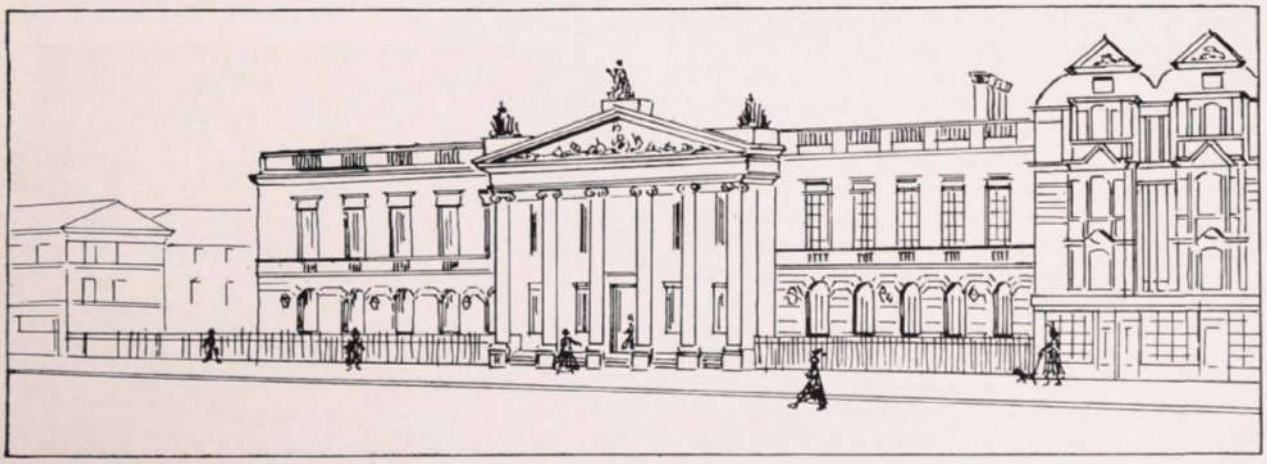
"Having thus the option of the *Chinese*, as well as the *European* Markets, no other Traders could stand in competition to it," he wrote, implying that the Nor'westers' goose was cooked once his scheme became accomplished fact. He meant their goose to be cooked. His aim was to "secure the Fur Trade" to Great Britain; he feared that if the Nor'westers "were to reach the South Sea [the Pacific] it is highly probable they would, in conjunction with Emigrants from the United States of America . . . establish themselves on that Sea and carry on the Trade independant of the Kingdom, Whereas the Factories in Hudson's Bay can never be alienated from the Mother Country."

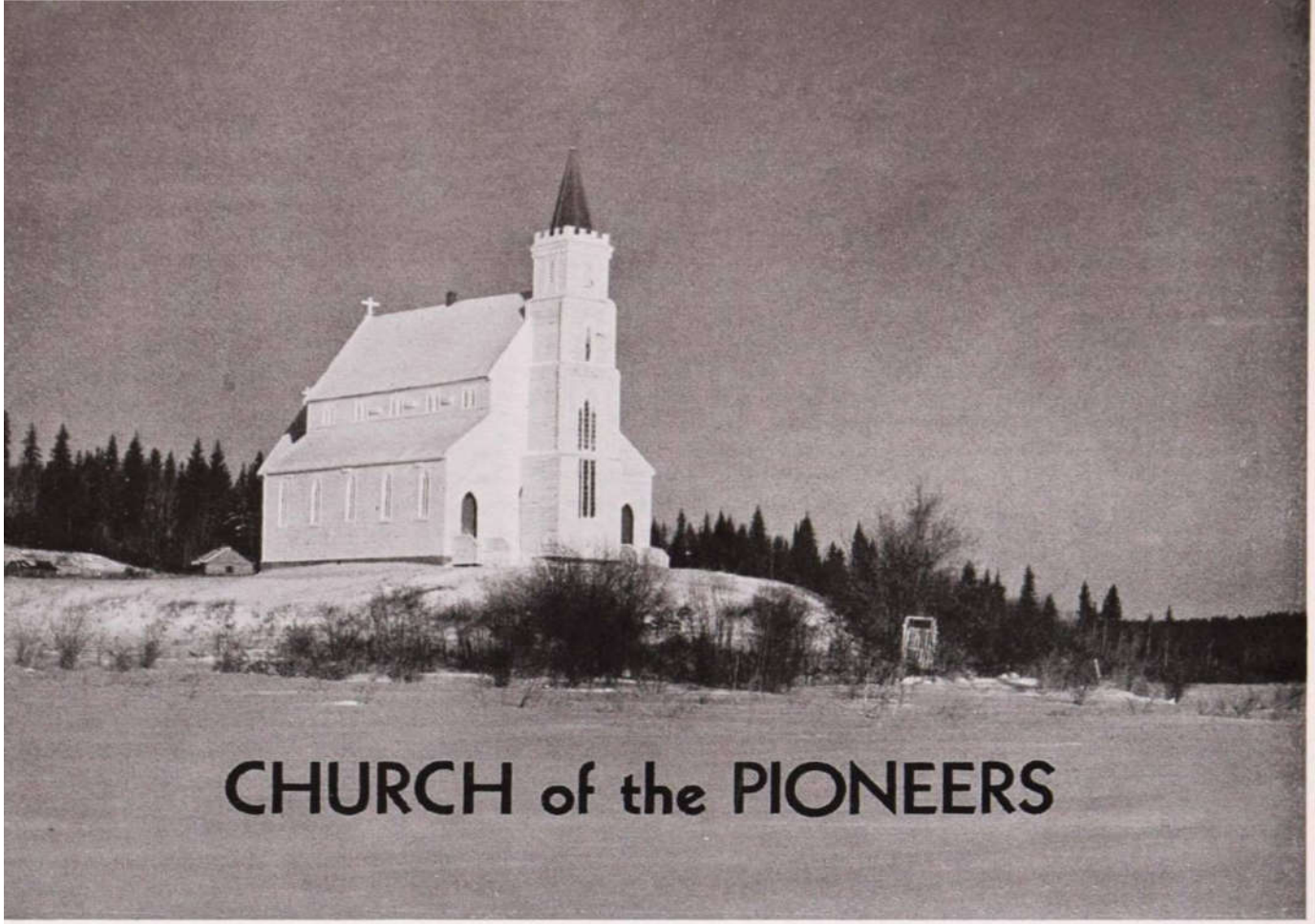
In all this there is much shrewdness and far-sighted acumen, coupled with a most painstaking amassing and weighing of all available evidence, but rarely can any hopes so elaborately built have been dashed so fast as Dalrymple's. Within a couple of years of its publication Mackenzie had corroborated Indian reports (duly and cautiously noted by Dalrymple) that the Athabaska and Great Slave Lakes emptied into the Arctic; and Vancouver, specially charged at Dalrymple's instance with finding De Fonta's river, proved, on the contrary, that it did not exist.

Yet the collapse of Dalrymple's geographical house of cards did not make his scheme unsound. The Pacific could be, and was, reached from the Saskatchewan, by packhorse over the mountains, and out by the Columbia, which, if sadly inferior to De Fonta's noble river, was still a very serviceable waterway. It was not, of course, reached by the Hudson's Bay Company. Handicapped as their rivals had not been by the War of American Independence (and not by that alone) the traders whose factories on Hudson's Bay could "never be alienated from the Mother Country" had got away to a very bad start in the race across the Continent, as Dalrymple had noted with some pain. They still trailed behind and it was their American and Canadian rivals who reached and settled on the coast. After the union of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies in 1821, however, an attempt was made to open a fur trade direct to Canton in conjunction with the East India Company; but, as no union between that body and the new Hudson's Bay Company had taken place, their divided interests were fatal. The fur traders were permitted to carry beaver to Canton, but not to carry tea away, and the long voyage home in ballast ate up all profits on the fur. Dalrymple's great design was wrecked by the jealousy of his successors in his own company.

Preciser historians tell us we should not speculate on the "ifs" of history. But, as Eve suggested to Adam long ago, forbidden things are often fun. Let us then recklessly speculate for a moment on what the realization of Dalrymple's scheme at the time he proposed it, or soon after, might have meant for Canada. Legislation of 1785 had brought the East India Company under cabinet control. The H B C must have shared that control. The India Office was constantly accused of indifference to the commercial interests of the East India merchants. A similar lack of sympathy to the fur trade might have tended to open the West to settlement at an earlier date and ease the cession of Rupert's Land to Canada; likewise, the apparently irresistible impulse of governments to do more and more governing might have brought far sooner the beneficent hand of law and order to the troubled plains. One can picture, too, the fortified trading posts built along the coast, and garrisoned, doubtless with turbaned sepoys, against the jealousy of the Spaniard. Here would have been such an "effective occupation" of the Oregon coast as none could have disputed. Nor perhaps would that have been all. In 1796 came an outbreak of war between England and Spain which would have made California as fair a prey to the dusky legions of the East India Company as the scattered French stations in India itself, and rarely has Spain been less capable of self-defence. But stop! Our pipe-dream (and, doubtless, improbable) conquest of California opens such a breathtaking vista of Canada's potential boundaries expanding south-westward that the imagination of the hardiest must boggle here. The preciser historians were apparently right after all in warning us against the "ifs" of history. Nevertheless, Alexander Dalrymple may still be worth remembering, even if he lived and died an unrepentant mercantilist.

East India House in London, where Dalrymple devised his grandiose scheme.





CHURCH of the PIONEERS

Holy Trinity Church, on the bank of the Churchill River at Stanley, Saskatchewan (pop. 450), was built in 1853-60.

Photos and Story
by Doras C. Kirk

ACROSS the Churchill River from the Hudson's Bay Company Post at Stanley, Saskatchewan, stands Holy Trinity Church, the oldest church in the Saskatchewan Anglican Diocese. Although it has weathered the storms and suns of nearly 100 years, this church is still one of the finest in the north country. It stands on a grassy hill overlooking the river, its shining whiteness in direct contrast to the dark green of the surrounding countryside. The spire is topped with a weather cock. A sun dial mounted on the front of the tower is no longer used, but when the church was built it was very useful in keeping a time check. At that period the only time-pieces in the country were the watches belonging to the missionary and his wife.

Although the mission was established in the area in 1846, the actual building of the church took place between the years 1853-60. Lumber and logs used in the construction were all whipsawn near the site. The hinges, locks and other hardware, as well as the stained glass windows, were brought from England through Hudson Bay and transported from there up the waterways and overland by a long and difficult journey.

Rev. Robert Hunt and his wife were chiefly responsible for the building of the church and invested their personal savings in its erection. They came out from England in 1850 and, after a couple of years at Lac la Ronge, arrived at the Indian settlement on the Churchill River called by

The interior. Note that the hymn board bears Cree syllabic characters.

its Cree name, Amuchewaspimewin, (the place where he shoots an arrow up the hill). The oldest residents of Stanley today tell an interesting story about that name. In the days before Christianity came, the Indians regarded the high bluff opposite their village as a sacred place. When their hunters departed, they stopped their canoes at the base of the cliff and attempted to shoot an arrow to the top. If they succeeded they would be assured a successful season on their hunting grounds.

Here the Hunts decided to establish a mission, which they called Stanley after Mrs. Hunt's home in England, Stanley Park. It was a difficult task they had set themselves, for they were working against time in an effort to get comfortable quarters built before the winter closed down. On December 6th, Mr. Hunt reported that, in spite of their efforts, they were still living and sleeping in a calico tent, without a fire.

By January the Hunts were able to move into a partly finished house, but according to extracts from Mr. Hunt's diary their living quarters were not very comfortable.

"January 12th: The spirit thermometer registered 70 degrees of frost; at dinner the water froze in our glasses.

"January 20th: Still colder: 47 degrees of frost in the breakfast room. The young calf frozen in the cow house."

Mr. Hunt and his devoted wife gave of their very best to build up the mission at Stanley. The church remains as a memorial of their work.

Authentic information concerning the actual building of the church is scarce, as many of the records were destroyed by fire. However, from reports by the elderly natives of Stanley today, it seems probable that skilled carpenters were sent out from the Red River Settlement to assist, and direct the Indian labour employed.

The pioneer missionaries of Stanley Mission have left their stamp on the country in more ways than one. Various lakes throughout northern Saskatchewan bear their names today—Hunt Lake, Hunter Bay, McKay Lake and Settee Lake, to name a few.

Stanley Mission now has no resident missionary, but is served periodically by the resident missionary at Lac la Ronge. Regular Cree services are kept up weekly by the native chief, who keeps all the church records in Cree in his own church register until the arrival of the visiting missionary.

Summer and winter, the shining white church serves as a landmark for travellers, whether by air or water.

BOOK REVIEWS

Border River

RAINY RIVER COUNTRY: *A Brief History of the Region Bordering Minnesota and Ontario.* By Grace Lee Nute. The Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, 1950. 143 pages.

AMONG regions as among men, the exceptional prominence of some tends to result in the neglect of others by the historian. So it has been with the Rainy River Country. Though discovered early by explorers like the La Vérendryes, and used almost continuously from that time forward by fur traders from the Canadas or from Hudson Bay, the district which derives its natural unity from Rainy River and from the two lakes which that stream unites, has been overshadowed in regional history by more spectacular neighbours like the Lake Superior area and the Valley of the Red River of the North. Fortunately this period of neglect has now come to an end.

The author of *Rainy River Country* was well equipped for her task. An historian of the fur trade which was long the sole basis of importance of the region concerned, Dr. Nute has served another exacting apprenticeship in the regional field by writing *The Voyageur's Highway*, "a history of the border-lake country of Minnesota and Ontario eastward from Rainy Lake." The quality of this latter volume is attested by the fact that it has already reached its fifth printing since its original publication in 1941. In *Rainy River Country* Dr. Nute has displayed the same high qualities of writer and historian that helped to make the companion volume such a good success.

As far as is possible within the compass of 141 pages, the present book is comprehensive. In time its subject-matter extends from the geological eras in which it was formed to the year 1950. Its topics range from prehistoric inhabitants to current racial types and include topography, flora and fauna, industrial activities, transportation and international relations. It is liberally sprinkled with illustrations which are mostly modern photographs, but also contains several maps. Appended to it is an extensive and useful bibliography of source material or supplementary reading. It is provided with an index.

Because of its compressed variety and comprehensiveness, as well as on account of its clear and easy style, Dr. Nute's volume is likely to appeal to a wide range of readers. The historian will find it accurate, informative, and convenient. The general reader will be attracted by its simplicity, its pictorial approach, and its human-interest emphasis.

On the whole, the effect of time has been to increase rather than decrease the relative importance of the Rainy River area itself. For a century after its discovery, though it was rich in furs, it was regarded by the fur-traders less as a preserve than as a link in the vast line of fur communications extending westward from Montreal to the Pacific. The same role was emphasized afterwards by the settler hurrying westward to the Canadian prairies and the railwayman building an empire of steel. The coming of the lumberman, the miner, the farmer and the pulp and paper industrialist has tended increasingly to reverse this attitude. The country is now valued more for its own sake than for any outside "interest." The fact is emphasized, both on the American and the Canadian sides of the border, by the growth of a vigorous local patriotism and by the rise, among other activities, of a thriving tourist business. It is also indicated by the appearance, from the hand of a gifted writer and historian, of a volume devoted entirely to the Rainy River Country. — *John Perry Pritchett.*

B. C. River

THE FRASER, by Bruce Hutchison (Rivers of America Series), Clarke, Irwin & Co., Toronto, 1950.

ONE reads Bruce Hutchison's new book with mixed feelings, mostly of admiration for his gift of drama, but sometimes with a sense of annoyance. Hutchison, with his flair for drawing the unusual out of day-to-day happenings, glamourizes the history of British Columbia. He clothes many of its early-day characters in colourful garb, until they live for the reader, freed from the dry presentation of history books. This is to the good—for our history, to be interesting and widely read, must be glamourized—though facts must be preserved.

What annoys one in this book are the historical inaccuracies. They make one just a bit suspicious of all Hutchison's material. One cannot help but wonder how much is true history, how much the product of his fertile brain and swift-flowing torrent of words. For instance, he states: "Opportunely Governor Seymour dies of his troubles in his decaying mansion." The fact of this matter is that Governor Seymour died aboard *H.M.S. Sparrowhawk* (1869) at Bella Coola, up-coast from Vancouver.

Hutchison states boldly and flatly that Sir James Douglas—father of British Columbia—was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland. But there is no known proof where Douglas was born. Most historians believe he was born in the West Indies.

Again, Hutchison says Dr. J. S. Helmcken was the leader of the annexation party—implying that he wanted B.C. to join the U.S. Helmcken took no such stand—he

didn't want B.C. to join Canadian Confederation, true; he wanted B.C. to remain a British Crown Colony, responsible to the British Government in London, not to the Canadian Government in Ottawa. He lost, and in 1871, British Columbia joined Canada.

This reviewer was particularly disappointed with the poor, unattractive make-up of *The Fraser*. The paper is cheap, the illustrations by Richard Bennett are so reproduced that they come out like black blobs. They are of rivers and mountains and river banks, but they might be anywhere. One can't help thinking that good photographs would have been better.

The index also leaves much to be desired. E.g.: It lists "Johnson, Bryan, page 195." But page 195 is a picture! On page 197 is a reference to *Byron* Johnson. This sort of slip-shod work is no credit to Canadian publishing—especially for $4.50.

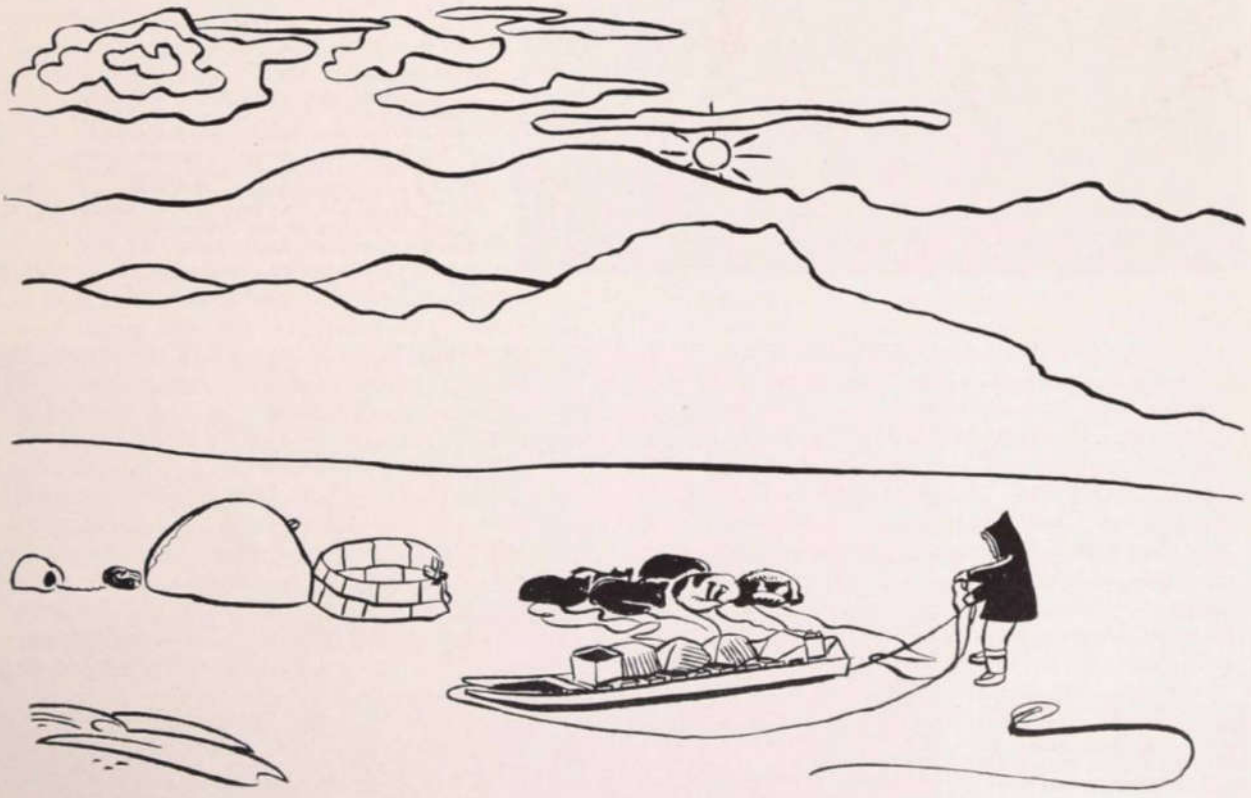
One forgets these annoyances (all petty, perhaps, but they add up) when one gets lost in the excellence of Hutchison's descriptive writing. His yarning of the gold-rush days in the Cariboo is quite entrancing. The reader can almost imagine himself there, tasting of the excitement, making, with the riotous miners, a fortune one day, losing it in one wild overnight orgy. Who in Canada can write better than this?:

"Barkerville was real. Men had lived in these buildings, miners had walked those sidewalks, girls had danced in these empty barrooms, stagecoaches had clattered down this narrow street, bull teams had toiled through the mud, and in the opera house, with its queer tower, held up now by long props, strolling players had acted Shakespeare and taken their pay in nuggets."

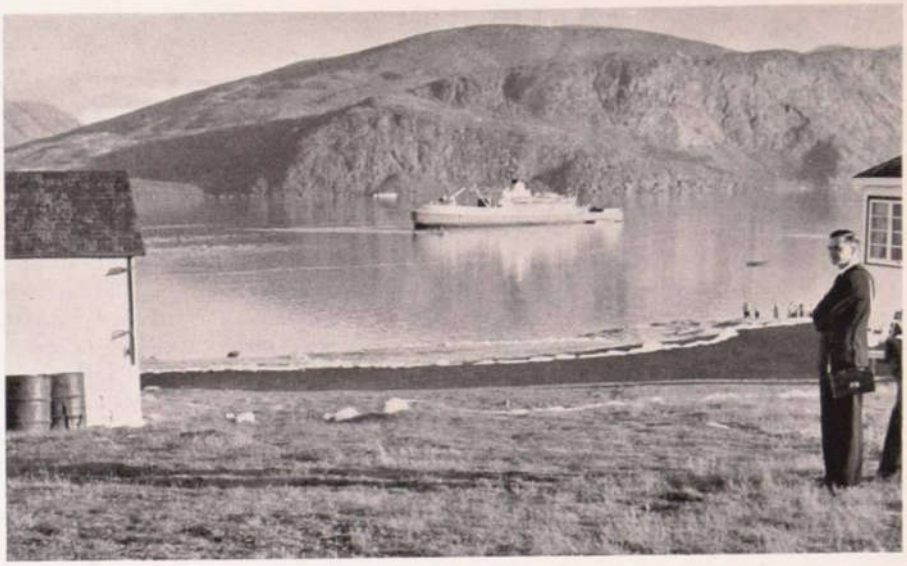
There are many such samples of Hutchison's fine writing. That is why the book is worthwhile, despite the minor errors of history. Running through it like a strong, unbreakable thread is the story of the Hudson's Bay Company and its contribution—in spite of some of its mistakes—to Canada, and how it was largely responsible for the development of British Columbia in the first place.

The book points out what few British Columbians and few Canadians realize—that the Fraser is the very life-blood of the far west of Canada, that without the Fraser, Vancouver would most likely not have been born. Hutchison has spent many vacations, and many working hours by its banks, thrilling all the time to its might and its romance. Because of this, one senses his love of the great river. Certainly, in his book, he gives us a picture of the river itself and its vivid past, and he makes us realize its glamour, its value to all Canada, and its tremendous potentialities.—*James Nesbitt.*

DRAWN BY AN ESKIMO. This sketch of an Eskimo with his igloo and dog team was made by Simon, a young native of Cape Smith on the east coast of Hudson Bay. It was drawn in faint pencil lines, and as it seemed worthy of publication, the lines were carefully inked in by James Houston, the artist, who knows the country and the people. On the left is a dog igloo made for a prospective mother—who prefers to sleep outside with her tail over her nose—and on the right is a dog whip. The sun is rising behind snow covered hills.



Towering up like a luxury cruise ship, the new Canadian Government vessel lies anchored at an Arctic post.

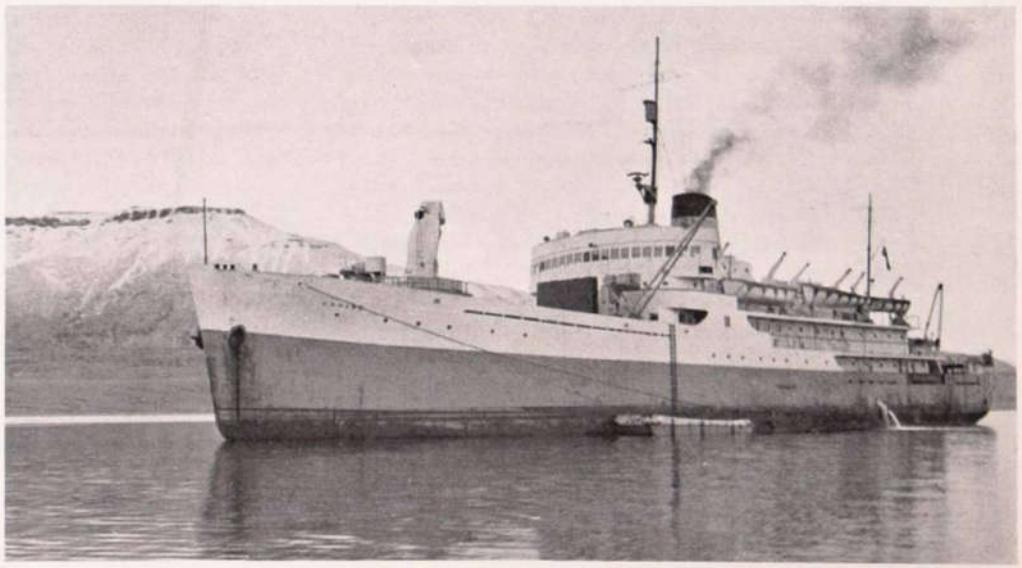


In Pangnirtung fiord. R. E. G. Johnston, government accountant, on the right.

On the Maiden Voyage of the *C. D. Howe*

Photos by J. W. Anderson

Some of the passengers. L. to R.: Alex Stevenson (ex-H B C) officer i/c Eastern Arctic Patrol. Insp. H. A. Larsen, R.C.M.P., of St. Roch fame. Miss V. Rundle, nurse i/c St. Luke's Hospital, Pangnirtung. Miss P. Clayton, Pangnirtung. F/L Wynne, R.C.A.F. M.O. Rt. Rev. D. B. Marsh, Anglican Bishop of the Arctic. Dr. R. S. Robertson, dentist. Miss P. Brown, R.C.A.F. nursing sister.



At anchor in Arctic Bay. The large object forward of the bridge is a heavy derrick for lifting the landing barges that ply between ship and shore.

First Short-Wave in the Arctic

by E. F. McDonald

In the story "First Flights in Canada's Arctic," which appeared in the September Beaver, *Frank Ellis stated that in one of the two planes which made the first landing in the Canadian Arctic there was an engineer named McDonald. This statement has brought forth the following highly informative letter from the "engineer" himself—Commander Eugene F. McDonald, Jr., now president of the great Zenith Radio Corporation of Chicago.*

IN his article Mr. Ellis identifies me as an engineer. I thank him for the compliment, but the fact is that I am not an engineer—electrical, radio, mechanical, steam, Diesel, or otherwise.

I served as second-in-command of the 1925 MacMillan National Geographic Expedition, in command of the steamship *Peary*, and Lieutenant-Commander Byrd who led the air contingent was under my command.

That 1925 trip was replete with interesting and amusing incidents, and made history for radio as well as for aviation. Up until that time ships at sea and government services depended on long-wave radio, which lost its voice for long range transmission during daylight. Short-wave had been judged by many highly educated authorities to be useless and was turned over to amateurs to play with, but Canadian and American kids were putting it to use to cover phenomenal distances.

Our expedition was equipped with short-wave, and I had persuaded Admiral Ridley McLean of the United States Navy to commission a young radio amateur, Fred Schnell, as a lieutenant in the Navy, and put him, together with his short-wave equipment, on board the U.S.S. *Seattle*, flagship of the fleet that began a Pacific good-will cruise in 1925.

Our Navy was at that time so dubious about the value of short-wave that when they learned I had dumped their long-wave equipment ashore in Maine they sent a destroyer chasing after us, and insisted that we could not take the Navy contingent into the Arctic without it.

We put the Navy's long-wave equipment back on board and hooked it up, but it did not take long to prove its worthlessness for long range communication during the Arctic summer. I offered to give any member of the expedition $1,000 if he could raise a single station by long-wave after we had entered the area of 24-hour daylight; although different people tried many times, our long-wave was not once answered while we were in that area.

At Godhavn, Greenland, in July, we had another example of short-wave superiority for long range communication. I needed coal for the *Peary*, but the Greenland officials could not sell me any without authorization from their officials in Washington. I suggested that they radio for this authorization, using their just-completed radio transmitter, but was told that their radio station (long-wave), for all its high power and tall towers, could not communicate with the outside world until night returned again in the autumn. I then suggested using the *Peary's* short-wave equipment. We called an amateur in Washington, had him get in touch with the Danish ambassador, and within an hour had the authorization that started the lighters bringing coal to my ship.

All the way to Etah, in north Greenland, long after the perpetual daylight had made our long-wave radio ineffective, we kept in direct short-wave communication with the *Seattle* while it cruised west and south across the Pacific, although even the *Seattle's* powerful long-wave equipment was out of direct daylight communication.

While anchored at Etah we sent the sound of Eskimo's singing to Admiral Coontz, on board the *Seattle* off the coast of Tasmania, almost exactly half the world away. (He remarked that the Eskimo song sounded more like a college cheer than singing.) That proved the value of short-wave to the Navy, which soon adopted it. The navies and merchant marine of the world soon followed, and it is this same short-wave, "down in the bucket" below 100 meters, that enables Canada's far flung outposts to maintain dependable communication with each other.

While we were at Etah a very interesting incident occurred. We had heard the Canadian government radio station calling and calling for the Canadian exploration steamship *Arctic*. When we heard no answer, I had my radio operators on the S.S. *Peary* also put in a call for the S. S. *Arctic*. But they did not answer us, either, even though we had the most powerful radio equipment that had ever gone north on a vessel and had proved our ability to communicate directly half way around the world.

Finally, one day late in August, the *Arctic* sailed into Etah harbour. I went over and paid my respects to that great old Canadian commander, Captain Joseph E. Bernier of Levis, Quebec. I told him that the Canadian government had been calling for him on the radio and that they were very much worried. His answer was interesting: "Damn it, they never used to worry about me until they got this confounded new gimmick—radio! I could go away for a year and my people would not worry, but with our radio transmitter, that went out of commission weeks ago, they worry their heads off because they don't hear from us." Captain Bernier had advised against it, but the Inspector-General insisted. So they went into Cumberland Sound and there they got caught in the ice. While they could, with their radio receiver, hear the Canadian government calling them and also the steamship *Peary* calling them, they could not answer because their transmitter was out of commission.

WINTER PACKET

The Cover

Anthony Henday of the Hudson's Bay Company was the first white man to see the Rockies, and the first to penetrate to the hunting grounds of the warlike Blackfeet. Our cover picture shows him entering the Blackfoot camp which, judging by his descriptions, lay about half way between the sites of modern Edmonton and Calgary.

This was in 1754. The Company had been trading at York Factory—occasionally interrupted by the French—for about seventy years. Henry Kelsey had been sent west in 1690 to bring some prairie Indians down to trade, and his journey had been such a success that for the next half century a stream of furs flowed down the rivers to the traders on the Bay, brought by the Indian trappers.

It was a most economical arrangement, with a minimum of staff to pay and feed, and with all the difficulties of travel and transport through a virgin wilderness being borne by those who were best equipped to handle them. But for the past fifteen years or so, the stream of furs had been partly diverted by the French, who had built trading posts at strategic locations from Portage la Prairie to The Pas, and had themselves assumed the huge expenses of shipping trade goods and furs between the Indian hunting grounds and the warehouses of the whites.

It then became evident to the Englishmen that contact must be made with other tribes beyond the area of French penetration. And so, to quote Andrew Graham, chief at York, "bold, enterprising" Anthony Henday "voluntarily offered his service to go inland with the natives and explore the country, and to endeavour to draw down the different tribes to the Factory."

It seems to have been characteristic of H B C explorers in the early history of the West that they travelled singly with Indians. While Northwesters like Mackenzie, Fraser, and Thomson were supported by numbers of white men, men like Kelsey, Henday, Cocking, and Hearne, put themselves alone into the hands of their Indian friends.

In Henday's case the Indians—judging from their names—were Cree. Yet when they came to the Blackfoot camp, consisting of two hundred teepees pitched in two rows, they were welcomed by the head chief and feasted in style. "They are very kind people," wrote Henday in his journal. And it speaks volumes for his courage and tact that he should be shown such hospitality by a tribe who soon came to be recognized as the fiercest warriors of the plains, and the deadly enemies of the Cree.

The chief gave Henday a handsome bow and arrows, and in return the white man gave him "a part of each kinds of goods I had, as ordered by Mr. Isham's written instructions." But when he asked if the chief would allow some of his young men to go down to the sea for similar trade goods, "he answered, it was far off, & they could not live without Buffalo flesh; and that they could not leave their horses &c: and many other obstacles, though all might be got over if they were acquainted with a Canoe, and could eat fish, which they never do. The Chief further said they never wanted food, as they followed the Buffalo and killed them with Bows and Arrows; and he was informed the Natives that frequented the Settlements, were oftentimes starved on their journey. Such remarks," adds Henday, "I thought exceeding true."

So the first travelling salesman in Alberta met some unexpected sales resistance and returned to York Factory, which he reached in June 1755. His mission to the Blackfeet was a failure, but he made, as Prof. Arthur Morton says, "one of the most astonishing journeys in the astonishing history of the fur trade. . . . There is no feat in all the history of Northwestern travel that surpasses this."

Contributors

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Chipewyan Fisherman Richard Harrington

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